Shojo Beat Manga

Tail of the Moon™

Story & Art by

Rinko Ueda

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Tail of the Moon

Usagi is the granddaughter of the leader of a prestigious ninja village, but she's such a klutz that she's never made it out of the kiddie class. Frustrated with Usagi's lack of progress, her great-grandfather sends her to marry Lord Hanzo and have lots of ninja babies. But the lord has no interest in her or her childbearing potential!

Goemon and Mamezo are taken hostage by the Kanbutsu clan, and the price for their lives is an "Instant Death" poison, which Usagi must create. Their captor, however, seems intent on killing Goemon whether Usagi makes the poison or not…

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Story & Art by

Rinko Ueda

A romantic ninja adventure!

Shojo Beat

Tail of the Moon

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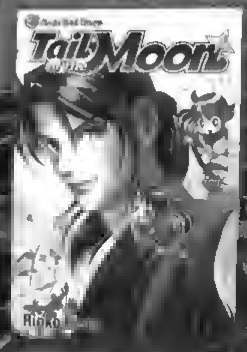
CAN USAGI SAVE LIVES WITH AN "INSTANT DEATH" POISON?

Tail of the Moon

By Rinko Ueda



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Tail of the Moon

Volume 6

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Story Thus Far...

It is the Era of the Warring States. Usagi is a failure as a ninja, but she is a skilled herbalist. She is working hard to qualify as a ninja so she can be the bride of Hattori Hanzo (aka "Shimo no Hanzo").

After fulfilling her assignment in Hamamatsu, Usagi is finally able to return to Iga. But suddenly Hanzo's elder sister Suzune appears before her! Usagi is overjoyed when Hanzo introduces her to Suzune as his bride-elect. Unfortunately, Suzune is totally against the marriage! In the hope that Suzune will accept her, Usagi begins to train under Suzune to learn the know-hows of becoming a good wife. Even with her diet, Usagi works hard and is finally accepted by Suzune!

One day, Usagi heads for Hamamatsu to learn the secrets of how to lose weight. On the way, she is captured by Hikaru and taken to Kouga. At the village, Usagi is ordered to make a poison with Goemon as a hostage ..?!

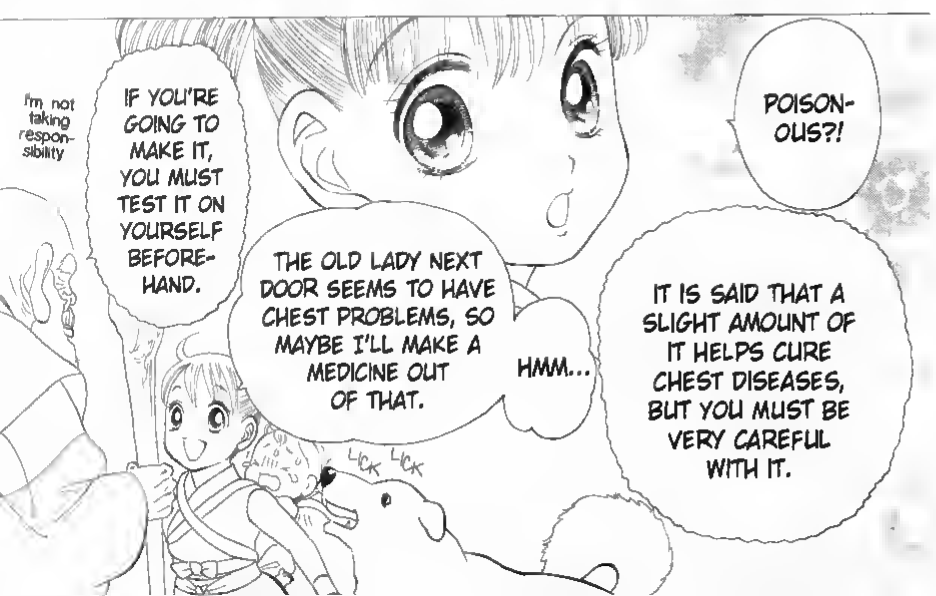
WELL THEN, YOU GIVE ME NO CHOICE.
POISON ?!
SHHN
I DON'T WANT TO MAKE POISON!!
NOOOOO, LISA...!!
I'LL START BY GETTING RID OF MY BLACK ANGEL...
DON'T!!

LISA!!
MAMEZO!!
GOEMON!!
WAAARGH
!!
GRAB
YOU WILL DO AS I ASKED, WON'T YOU?

I CAN'T CALL FOR HELP NOW...
USAGI!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME, JUST ESCAPE WITH MAMEZO!!
I WANT TO MAKE SURE THAT YOU DON'T GET SEPARATED FROM YOUR LITTLE ASSISTANT.
SHOOM
WAIT.
I'LL GO AND MAKE IT AT ONCE!!
KLANG
I'M NOT GOING TO LEAVE YOU HERE ALL ALONE, GOEMON!!
I WON'T!!

SO LET THEM DOWN!!
I'LL MAKE IT!!
HE'S MY ASSISTANT, SO...
THEN...AT LEAST LET MAMEZO DOWN!!
WAAARGH
USAGI!
DON'T LISTEN TO WHAT HE'S SAYING!!
I CAN'T LET THEM GO UNTIL YOU MAKE IT.
NOW I CAN HAVE MAMEZO GO GET HELP!
I WAS SO SCARED...!!
MAMEZO !!
USA!!
GRMP
HMM...
I GUESS YOU DO NEED AN ASSISTANT.
KCHH
SNIFF
SNIFF

THERE'S ONLY A VERY THIN LINE SEPARATING MEDICINE AND POISON...
...CAN YOU REALLY MAKE POISON?
USA...
YES...
HEY, USAGI.
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO USE THIS KIMIKAGESO FOR?
KIMIKAGESO IS A POISONOUS HERB.
Don't be mean to Shiro
COME ON, SHIRO... RUN...
I PUT THEM THERE BECAUSE THEY'RE CUTE.

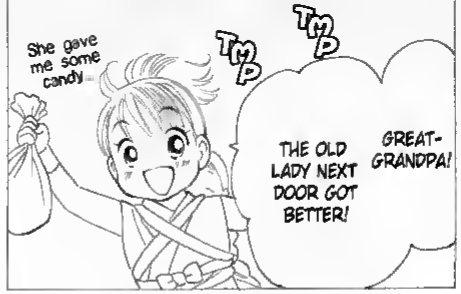

I'm not taking responsibility
IF YOU'RE GOING TO MAKE IT, YOU MUST TEST IT ON YOURSELF BEFOREHAND.
POISONOUS?!
THE OLD LADY NEXT DOOR SEEMS TO HAVE CHEST PROBLEMS, SO MAYBE I'LL MAKE A MEDICINE OUT OF THAT.
HMM...
IT IS SAID THAT A SLIGHT AMOUNT OF IT HELPS CURE CHEST DISEASES, BUT YOU MUST BE VERY CAREFUL WITH IT.
LICK LICK

YOU CAN'T KILL ME, GOEMON.

I'M SO SORRY...
I'M SORRY... SHIRO!
SHIRO HAS TAUGHT YOU THE DANGER OF POISON, USAGI.
THIS POISON I'M MAKING RIGHT NOW...
...IS GOING TO BE USED TO KILL SOMEONE.

...OR GOEMON WILL BE KILLED!!
SNIFF SNIFF
BUT I HAVE TO MAKE IT...

SO THAT'S THE IGA CLAN'S HERBALIST...


She gave me some candy.
TMP TMP TMP
THE OLD LADY NEXT DOOR GOT BETTER!
GREAT-GRANDPA!

SHIRO'S DEAD.
SHIRO...
WHAT'S WRONG?

NOW USAGI...
SLURRP
IF YOU WANT TO KNOW ABOUT MEDICINE, YOU MUST LEARN FROM THE KNOWLEDGE OF YOUR PREDECESSORS.
USE THAT KNOWLEDGE TO CREATE MEDICINE AND TRY IT ON YOURSELF FIRST. THAT WAY, YOU CAN CREATE MEDICINE THAT WORKS BEST FOR THE PEOPLE WHO NEED IT.
Urrrgh... I took too much of it.
Waaa-ah
Usagi, don't die!

SHIRO SEEMS TO HAVE DRUNK THE WATER YOU KEPT THE KIMIKAGESO IN.
SHIRO WAS RUNNING AROUND JUST A WHILE AGO, RIGHT?!
THAT CAN'T BE!
THERE'S A CHANCE THAT MAMEZO MIGHT EAT IT BY ACCIDENT, YOU KNOW.
I TOLD YOU NUMEROUS TIMES NOT TO LEAVE THAT FLOWER AROUND.
THE KIMIKAGESO?

GSSH
GSSH
IF YOU MAKE ANY STUPID MOVES...
...I'M GOING TO HAVE TO BREAK THOSE ARMS NOW.

ONCE WE KNOW THE FORMULA FOR IT, WE NO LONGER HAVE ANY NEED FOR HER.
MASTER...
WHAT IS TO BE DONE WITH HER, AFTER SHE FINISHES MAKING THE POISON?
SHE IS STILL SO YOUNG...
NNGH...
NNGH
NNGH...
OINK!
OINK!
OINK!!
STOP CRYING.
OINK!!
PHEW.
FWISH
I'LL...
...HELP YOU IN A MINUTE.
OINK!
OINK!

FWUMP
KEE!
KEE...
YOU WANT ANOTHER ONE?
HURGH...

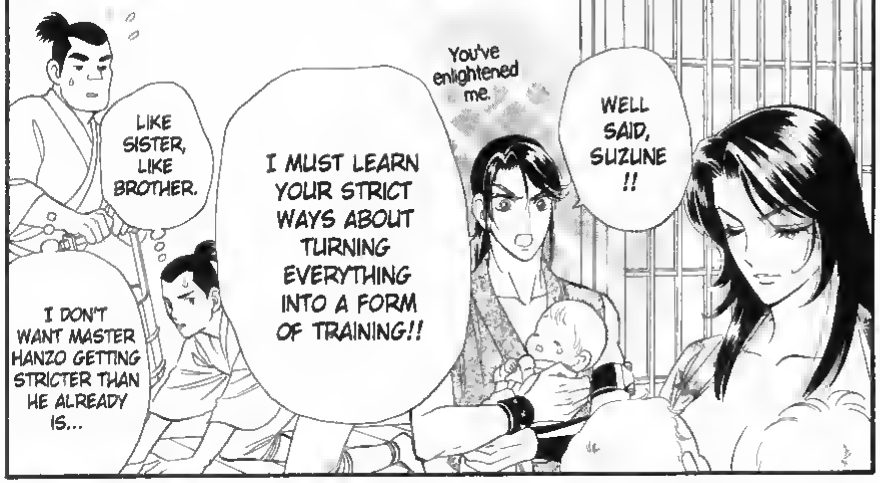
SASUKE?!
KEE...
SASUKE... YOU REMEMBER GOEMON?
AND HE NEVER BETRAYS ME...
SASUKE IS A VERY GOOD BOY.

I SEE THAT YOUR LEG'S FULLY RECOVERED.

AND I TOOK THE TROUBLE TO BREAK IT SO NICELY, TOO.

TCH
YOU REALLY DO SURPRISE ME.

DON'T TOUCH ME!!
WHUMP


LIKE SISTER, LIKE BROTHER.
I DON'T WANT MASTER HANZO GETTING STRICTER THAN HE ALREADY IS...
I MUST LEARN YOUR STRICT WAYS ABOUT TURNING EVERYTHING INTO A FORM OF TRAINING!!
You've enlightened me.
WELL SAID, SUZUNE !!

...THERE IS ONE THING I MUST ASK YOU RIGHT NOW.
BUT...

HOW DID YOU PROPOSE TO YOUR HUSBAND?
SUCK
SUCK
WHAT IS IT?

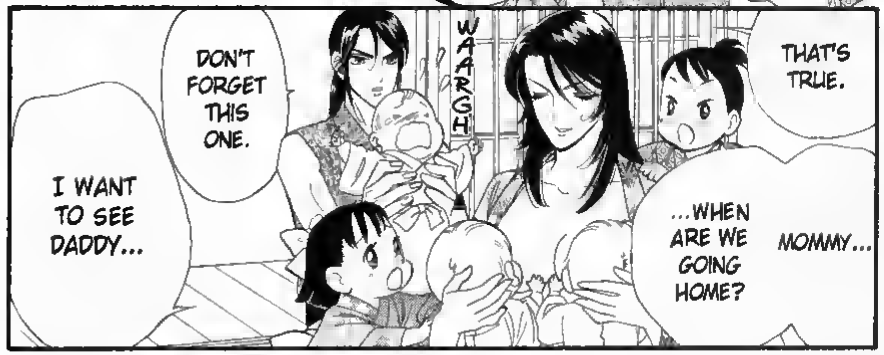
I WANT TO BE FULLY PREPARED FOR IT.
HOW PITI-FUL...
SIGH
PLEASE TELL ME.

I'M STILL DOING MY RESEARCH!!

PROPOSE?
He asked me that too
THAT'S WHAT HE ASKED ME THIS MORNING...
MASTER HANZO, ARE YOU GOING TO ASK USAGI TO MARRY YOU AT LAST?

RAISING A CHILD IS A FORM OF TRAINING TOO, YOU KNOW.
WAARGH
WAARGH
BUT I CAN'T BREAST-FEED THEM!!

TAKING CARE OF CHILDREN IS ONE THING, BUT TAKING CARE OF BABIES IS ANOTHER!!
WAARGH
WAARGH
SUZUNE!!
Come on, play with me...


DON'T FORGET THIS ONE.
I WANT TO SEE DADDY...
WAARGH
THAT'S TRUE.
...WHEN ARE WE GOING HOME?
MOMMY...

!!
WAARGH
WAARGH
SINCE YOU'RE A NINJA, WHY DON'T YOU TRY AND FIND THAT OUT BY YOURSELF?
SUCK
SUCK

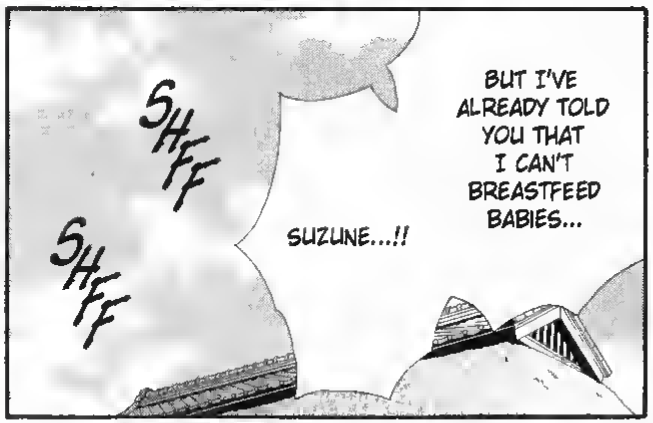
DON'T YOU THINK IT'S ABOUT TIME YOU TELL ME WHO YOU'RE MARRIED TO?
COME TO THINK OF IT...
WAARGH

GREETINGS
Hi there! Ue-Rin here.
Thanks to everyone, volume 6 of "Tail of the Moon" is now out.
In this volume, I'm going to be writing about "Ue-Rin's Manga School" in my column, just as I said I would last time.
Miss Ue-Rin's trademark are these papillon glasses.
Ha ha

SUZUNE?

SHFF
SHFF
I'M GOING OUT FOR A SHORT STROLL.

SHFF
SHFF
I'LL LEAVE THAT UP TO YOU!
HEY!
YOU'VE STILL GOT ONE MORE BABY TO FEED...


SHFF
SHFF
SUZUNE...!!
BUT I'VE ALREADY TOLD YOU THAT I CAN'T BREASTFEED BABIES...

PLANNED IT?

NOW YOU'RE SAYING IT...
HANZO, YOU'RE OLD ENOUGH NOW, SO YOU SHOULD TRY TO HAVE A BABY WITH USAGI.

WHAT?!
IT'S BECAUSE I BECAME PREGNANT.
You're so mean...!
Look, I'm Hatsune!
IT'S FINE. IT'S JUST THE WAY I PLANNED IT.
BUT AREN'T YOU SUPPOSED TO BECOME PREGNANT AFTER...?
SUCK
SUCK
SUCK

THAT'S TRUE, BUT...
THE HATTORI FAMILY WOULD BE STABLE WITH AN HERBALIST AS YOUR WIFE.
USAGI IS AN HERBALIST THAT EVEN TOKUGAWA IEYASU APPROVES OF, ISN'T SHE?
I'VE HEARD THAT THERE ARE VILLAGES WITHOUT HERBALISTS IN THE KOUGA CLAN THESE DAYS.
THAT'S RIGHT.
There There
AND THERE'S A SHORTAGE OF HERBALISTS EVERYWHERE RIGHT NOW...
...

KEE
YOU KNOW, YOU WERE REALLY CUTE WHEN WE FOUND YOU.
SASUKE...
BOY, YOU'VE GOTTEN OLD...
THANKS!
VSH

KW WH
HIKARU AND I HAD A FIGHT WHEN WE WERE DECIDING WHAT TO NAME YOU...
REMEMBER?
KEE!
PSH
HH
...!!

I'M COUNTING ON YOU.

IT'S JUST THAT I'VE NEVER MADE AN INSTANTANEOUS POISON BEFORE, SO IT'S DIFFICULT!!
I'M WORKING ON IT.
HOW IS IT COMING ALONG?

SCRCH
SCRCH
TUK
WHOA!

OWWW
PLEASE... SASUKE...
LOO... LOOSEN THE ROPE FOR ME...!!

SASUKE. YOU'RE REALLY HEAVY... CAN YOU GET OFF ME?
KEE...
KEE...

SERIOUSLY... MY ARMS ARE GOING TO RIP OFF...
CLING
KEE♪

URGH

AAARGH
AND I'M ACTUALLY GRATEFUL TO YOU FOR THAT!!
PS
HH
H
AGH
...
OINK...
SHIVER
KEE...
SHIVER

YOU...
YOU'VE STILL GOT A GRUDGE AGAINST ME FOR THAT?!
KEE...
THROB THROB
LINGH...
SASUKE...
...YOU MUSTN'T BELIEVE WHAT HE SAYS.
I DON'T.
IT'S BECAUSE OF THAT TIME...
GOEMON'S A LIAR.
...THAT I'VE BEEN ABLE TO BECOME A TRUE NINJA.
KWHH

WHAT...
DRINK IT.
HUFF HUFF
!!
DRINK IT AND LET ME SEE YOU DIE.
PRESS
GRMP
I'M NOT GOING TO LET YOU DO THAT!!
USAGI...
!!
GRIP
SLP
WHAP
AAAH

I'VE MADE THE POISON, SO LET GOEMON...
FWUMP
OWW
ACK
GOEMON...!!
STOP IT!!
HPP
HPP
IS THIS THE POISON?
ROLL
ROLL
OUCH...
NOT YET.
SO LET GOEMON DOWN!!
THAT'S RIGHT.
I HAVE TO FIND OUT WHETHER THIS POISON REALLY WORKS OR NOT.
WHY...

I SEE THIS REALLY IS A POISON...
PTT
YOU DID WELL...
...MY ANGEL.

NOOOO
OOO

TAIL OF THE MOON EXTRA: TODAY'S MISSION

"I WANT PRINCE HANZOU TO ESCORT ME!"

-MIKA, MIYAZAKI PREFECTURE

I'M A LITTLE WORRIED ABOUT HANZOU AND SARA AFTER THIS...
MISSION ACCOMPLISHED!
PRINCESS SARA IS RIGHT BEHIND YOU.
PRINCE HANZOU...
PRINCESS... MAY I HAVE THIS DANCE?

WAAARGH
DON'T DIE...
GOEMON !!
GOEMON!!
IF GOEMON HAD AGREED TO ENTER THE KOUGA CLAN WHEN I MET HIM DURING THE SPRING...
...THEN HE WOULD NEVER HAVE HAD HIS LEGS BROKEN...
...AND HE WOULDN'T HAVE HAD TO DIE HERE.

KCHH
THAT WAS EASY.
THU
D
THIS POISON REALLY DOES WORK.
GOEMON!!
IS GOEMON...
...DEAD...?

SHOVE
AAAH
THOK
SWING
HOW COULD YOU DO THAT TO GOEMON...?!
DON'T WORRY. I'LL SEND YOU DOWN TO WHERE GOEMON IS RIGHT AWAY.
AAAAAAAAAH

I THREW HIM DOWN A RAVINE AFTER THAT, SO I THOUGHT HE WAS DEAD.
THAT'S RIGHT.
"IT WAS BROKEN BY SOMEBODY, WASN'T IT?"
HIS LEGS...?!
I WAS REALLY SURPRISED TO SEE THAT HE WAS STILL ALIVE.
"I JUST MESSED UP DURING MY ASSIGNMENT."
"DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT."
YOU SEE, I'VE HAD TO KILL HIM TWICE NOW.
...HOW GOEMON FELT ALL THIS TIME...
I DIDN'T KNOW...
HOW...

GOEMON!!
I'LL KILL YOU IF YOU DO ANYTHING TO USAGI!
I TOLD YOU ALREADY...
RASP
RASP
WH...
WHY...?!
THANK GOD...
RUN FOR IT!!
HURGH
HA HA AH
URGH
FWUMP

IT'S BECAUSE OF THE POTION!
HANG IN THERE!!
GOEMON ?!
HUFF HUFF
...IT'S NUMB...
M...MY BODY...
GOEMON ?!
WHAT?!
...TAKE CARE OF HIKARU...
I'LL...
...YOU TWO MAKE A RUN FOR IT!!
YOU...
USA, THERE HE IS...!!
NO, YOU CAN'T!!
!!
YOU'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE!!

HUP
HEY!
DASH
YEEAOW
DOONK
AHH
OKAY!
TRIP
SPADDING
THAT POTION ONLY CAUSES TEMPORARY ASPHYXIATION!
I'M SO GLAD IT WORKED...
GOEMON, YOU'RE ALIVE...!!
MMPH...
PAK...
SHARK
YOU SURE ARE SOMETHING, USAGI...
OOH...

I'LL TALK TO MY BROTHER MYSELF!!
BUT I'M DOING THIS UNDER MASTER'S ORDERS...
GO!!
TH-THUMP
TWINGE
TMP
I'M THE ASSISTANT LEADER OF THIS VILLAGE.
MY NAME IS RIHEI SHINOYAMA.

KLANG
KSHHK
USHH
OW...
WE'RE DONE FOR!!
WHO...
STOP IT, HIKARU!!
RIHEI...
DON'T RAISE YOUR SWORD AGAINST SOMEONE FROM IGA!!

I MUST APOLOGIZE TO GOEMON AS WELL.

NO...

GOEMON'S LEGS WERE BROKEN, WHICH CAUSED A GREAT DEAL OF TROUBLE FOR MASTER MOMOCHI TANBA...

I COULD NOT STOP GOEMON'S HEADHUNTING INCIDENT THIS PAST SPRING.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT...

YOU'VE DONE MUCH TO TREAT THE PATIENTS IN THIS VILLAGE. I MUST APOLOGIZE FOR ALL THE RUDENESS...

OH NO...

YOU SAVED US IN RETURN, SO...

...FORGIVE US.

PLEASE...

UM...

...THE KOUGA CLAN CONSISTS OF 53 MIDDLE-RANKING NINJA FAMILIES SUPPORTING ONE ANOTHER...

UNLIKE THE IGA CLAN WHICH IS LED BY THE THREE HIGH-RANK NINJA FAMILIES, MOMOCHI, HATTORI, AND FUJIBAYASHI...

WE DO NOT WANT A WAR WITH MASTER TANBA, A HIGH-RANKING IGA NINJA...!!

WE DON'T WANT ANY PROBLEMS BETWEEN IGA AND KOUGA.

WHY...

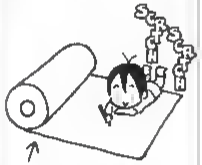
DON'T EVER TELL MASTER ABOUT THIS!!

HIKARU BROKE YOUR LEGS, AND YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH SO MUCH, GOEMON...

WHY?

UE-RIN'S WAY OF THE MANGA ①

Ue-Rin's encounter with Manga was pretty late. No one in my family read manga, so I had never read manga until I entered middle school. I liked to draw even before that, so I spent my early years drawing pictures after watching anime or looking through illustration books



I kept wasting huge rolls of paper that my parents brought back from the factory. Well, so I heard. (I hardly remember any of it.)

In middle school, my classmate brought *Weekly Margaret*, a manga magazine, to school

Margaret was a weekly magazine back then.

OH...
...
ARE YOU HURT SOMEWHERE TOO?
USA, WHAT'S THE MATTER...?
ARE YOU... HUNGRY OR SOME-THING....?
USAGI...

NO...
HIC...
TH...THE WEDDING THIS SPRING...
YOU CANCELLED IT, SO...
SNIFF...
I...I KEPT BLAMING YOU FOR IT...
I'M SORRY...!!

PANT
PANT
IT'S...
...NOTHING SERIOUS...
GOEMON... ...YOU'VE GOT SUCH A HIGH FEVER!!
NNGH...
JUST DO AS I SAY...
BUT GOEMON, YOU...

THANKS!!
...BUT I'LL GO AND PICK THEM RIGHT AWAY.
I DON'T HAVE ANY HERE...
MISTER, DO YOU HAVE ANY AO TSUZURA FUJI AND OTOGIRISO?!
IT IS SERIOUS!!

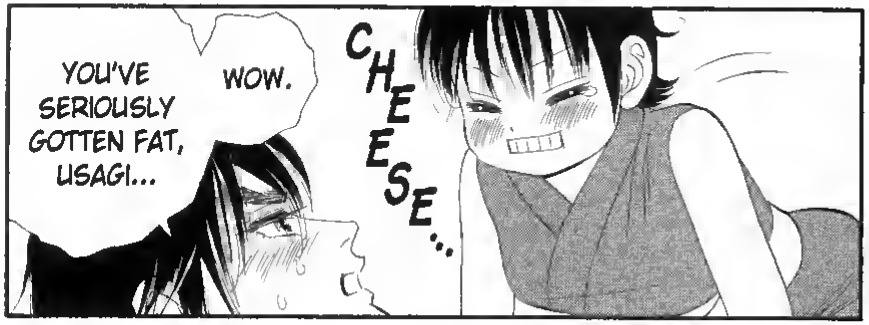
I'LL SAVE YOU AT ALL COSTS...!!
I'LL...
WHY...
HANG IN THERE!!
WHY IS IT ALWAYS GOEMON WHO GETS THE WORST OF THINGS...

WAAARGH
I FELT REALLY SAD WHEN I THOUGHT YOU DIDN'T LIKE ME ANYMORE!!
MASTER TOLD ME THAT YOU WERE DEPRESSED BECAUSE YOU NEVER GOT TO EAT THE FEAST...
THAT'S NOT THE ONLY REASON!!
WAAARGH
DON'T BLAME ME!
SMACK
NO WAY! HOW COULD HE DO THAT TO ME?!
SMACK
MEOW...
I STILL LIKE YOU, YOU KNOW THAT...
SNIFF
SNIFF
I WAS REALLY DEPRESSED BACK THEN...

AND I CAN'T WAIT FOR GOEMON TO COME BACK!
I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO THE FEAST... ♡
HEE
HEE
EH, ABOUT THAT...
...TELLING ME THAT HE'S GOING TO CANCEL THE WEDDING...
I JUST RECEIVED A LETTER FROM GOEMON...
THERE'S GOING TO BE A FEAST AT THE WEDDING TODAY, RIGHT?!
GREAT-GRANDPA...
MMM...
TMP
TMP
I HAD NO IDEA...THAT YOU WERE IN SO MUCH PAIN BACK THEN...
USA, YOU'RE GOING TO GET YOUR KIMONO DIRTY.

WELL... EH...YOU KNOW...
I'LL FIND YOU SOMEBODY ELSE, SO DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, USAGI...
CANCEL?

I KEPT REFUSING TO THINK ABOUT GOEMON'S FEELINGS FOR ME...
...
SNIFF

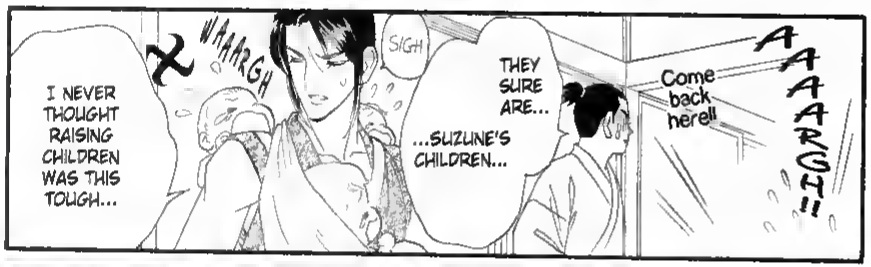

YOU'VE SERIOUSLY GOTTEN FAT, USAGI...
WOW.
CHEESE...

DON'T FORGET I'M INJURED!
OWWW...
HMPH...
I'M ON A DIET RIGHT NOW...!!
SHUT UP...

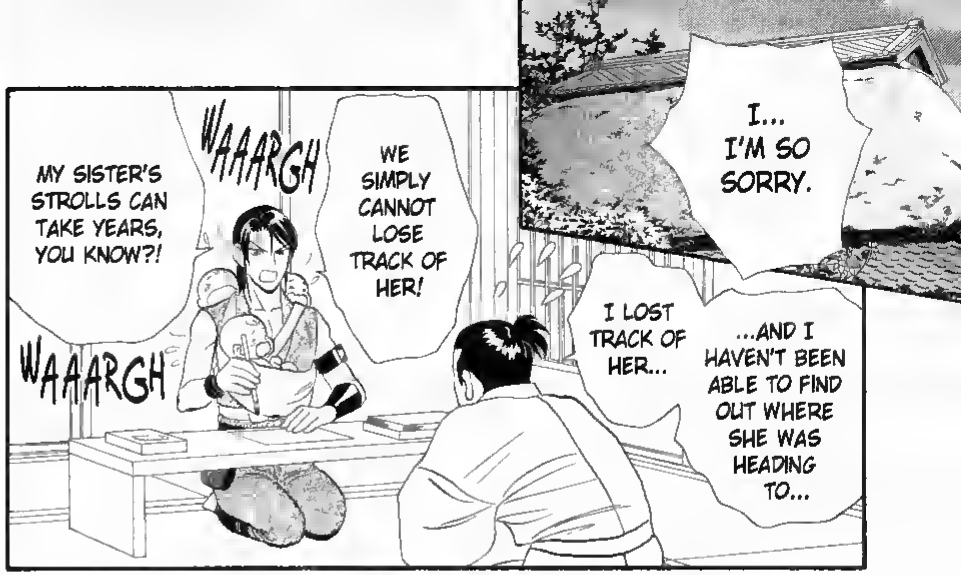
...EVEN THOUGH I KNOW HOW MUCH GOEMON THINKS OF ME, TOO...
OH.
SORRY!!
GOEMON...
YOU'RE BLEEDING !!

I'VE...
...ONLY BEEN THINKING ABOUT BEING HAPPY TOGETHER WITH HANZO...
YEAH...
AND YOU WERE ABLE TO MEET HANZO BECAUSE YOU DIDN'T MARRY ME, USAGI...
SEEING A SMILE ON YOUR FACE IS THE GREATEST CURE FOR ME.
COME ON, SMILE...

SIBLINGS SHOULD GET ALO...
...
TAKE THAT! AND THAT!
WAARGH
WAARGH
FWISH
FWISH
STOP IT...!


I NEVER THOUGHT RAISING CHILDREN WAS THIS TOUGH...
WAARGH
SIGH
THEY SURE ARE...
...SUZUNE'S CHILDREN...
Come back here!!
AAAARGH!!

THIS NINJA STAR...


I... I'M SO SORRY.
MY SISTER'S STROLLS CAN TAKE YEARS, YOU KNOW?!
WAAARGH
WE SIMPLY CANNOT LOSE TRACK OF HER!
WAAARGH
I LOST TRACK OF HER...
...AND I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO FIND OUT WHERE SHE WAS HEADING TO...

THAT'S PROBABLY WHY SHE WAS TRYING TO TEACH ME HOW TO TAKE CARE OF A CHILD...
WAAARGH
WAAARGH
I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT SHE WOULD DISAPPEAR AGAIN, LEAVING HER CHILDREN HERE...

PIGGY HATSUNE... ♪
WAAARGH
WAARGH
THERE THERE...
STOP FIGHTING...
EEEERGH..!!

HOW COULD YOU SAY THAT...!!
FWISH

BIG BROTHER, YOU'RE SO MEAN...!!
HATSUNE'S NOSE IS A PIGGY NOSE... ♪
R... REALLY ...?
WAAARGH
DING

SISTER!!
IS HANZO HERE TOO?!
HAVE YOU COME TO HELP US?!
WHOSE SISTER IS SHE?!
HUH?!
HEY!!
SHE'S HANZO'S SISTER.

WE'RE GOING TO GET OUT OF HERE!
WHAT?!
THERE'S NO GUARANTEE THAT WE'LL BE SAFE HERE...
!!
GOEMON...
YOU SHOULDN'T MOVE YET...
WHAT?!
TMP TMP
OVER HERE!
WHOA.
SHHHK
MAYBE IT'S HIKARU...?!
SOME-ONE'S COMING!!
TH-THUMP
TH-THUMP
TH-THUMP TH-THUMP

KOTONE!!
DARLING!
Dark ?
Koto
HUG
DARLING!!
WHA ...?!

WHO ARE YOU?
WH...
...WHO...
KOTONE!!

YOU'VE COME BACK...?!

TAIL OF THE MOON EXTRA: TODAY'S MISSION

"I WANT TO SEE HANZO SURROUNDED BY ROSES."

-MICHIYO, SAGA PREFECTURE

HANZO'S AS BEAUTIFUL AS ROSES, BUT I'M SURE HE'S GOT THORNS AS WELL... ♥
MISSION ACCOMPLISHED!
DURING THE LATTER HALF OF THE 15TH CENTURY IN ENGLAND, THERE WAS A WAR OVER THE THRONE CALLED WAR OF THE ROSES.
BUUSH
OHH

I WOULD NEVER HAVE LEFT THE HOUSE IF YOU HAD NOT CHEATED ON ME!!
SOME REASON?!
WIFE ?!
OH
PLEASE EXCUSE ME...
KOTONE HERE IS MY WIFE. SHE WAS AWAY FROM THE HOUSE FOR SOME REASON...

WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS...?!
SISTER...
SIS...
HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU THAT IT WAS A MISUNDER-STANDING?
DO YOU KNOW KOTONE?
OH?

SISTER AND THIS MAN FROM KOUGA ARE...
WHAT'S GOING ON...?!

I NEVER KNEW YOU HAD A BROTHER!
WHAT?!
I'VE LEFT THEM AT MY YOUNGER BROTHER'S PLACE.
KOTONE...
...WHERE ARE THE CHILDREN?!
WHAT'S GOING ON...?!
HE'S ALWAYS BEEN A WANDERER...
YES...
BUT HE'S MENDED HIS WAYS AND HAS TAKEN OVER THE FAMILY'S CARPENTRY BUSINESS...
A WANDERER AND A CARPENTER ?!
THEN I SHOULD GO AND PICK THE CHILDREN UP RIGHT AWAY, AND THANK YOUR BROTHER...
YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THAT.
I'VE ASKED MY BROTHER TO BRING THE CHILDREN HERE IN THREE DAYS' TIME.

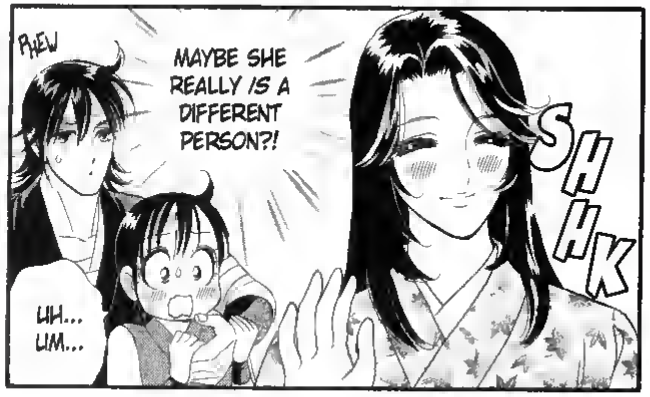
HUG
SWEAR THAT YOU'LL NEVER LOOK AT ANOTHER WOMAN BESIDES ME!!
YOU MUST SWEAR TO ME.
DARLING!!

SHUT HER UP!!
MOUTHS WORDS
!
EH...
EH...
WHAT MUST I DO TO SHOW YOU HOW MUCH I LOVE YOU?
OF COURSE I WILL.

I THINK SO TOO... SORRY ABOUT THAT!
THERE IS NO OTHER WOMAN IN THIS WORLD WHO IS AS BEAUTIFUL AS MY KOTONE!!

HMM?
YOUR WIFE LOOKS LIKE THIS LADY WHO LIVES IN OUR NEIGHBOR-

USAGI...
THAT'S SOME-ONE ELSE.
SIS...
FWAP



UE-RIN'S WAY OF THE MANGA ②

The first thing that came to my mind when I saw a manga magazine for the first time in my life was

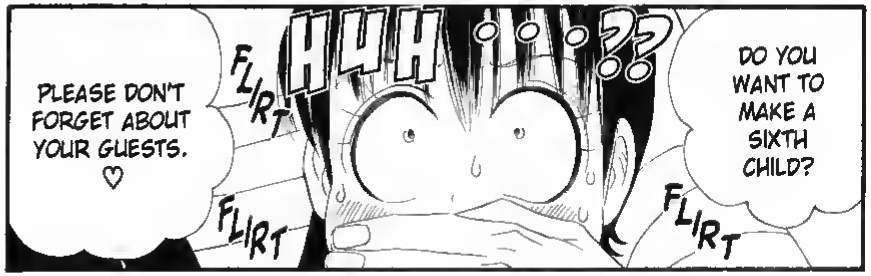
TALK ABOUT BEING BRASSY.o

Sorry to all the creators back then!

My youthful enthusiasm and naiveté was the starting point for my drawing manga.

But when I tried to draw manga, I didn't know how to do it exactly nor did I know what tools I needed...

So during my 1st year in middle school, I just kept copying the manga I liked and drew random original manga in my notebook...



...IS THERE SOME KIND OF TROUBLE WITH IGA?!
OH...
THESE PEOPLE FROM IGA ARE LEAVING SOON...
I...
...DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE NINJA WORLD SO...
THERE'S NOTHING FOR YOU TO BE WORRIED ABOUT.

CAN IT BE THAT SUZUNE ...?!
THE NINJA STAR HATSUNE USED WAS A KOUGA-STYLE ONE...
YAP
YAP
YAP
YAP
HFF
HFF
YOU'RE...!!

WHY CAN'T YOU LEARN TO SENSE WHAT'S GOING ON IN FRONT OF YOU?!
YOU IDIOT!
TMP
TMP
PINCH
UROWW
GLARE

I KNEW IT. IT IS SUZUNE...
YEEEF...
GRIP...
UNDER-STAND ?!
YOU'RE TO START PRACTICING YOUR NINJUTSU THE MINUTE YOU GO BACK TO IGA!!
CRNCH
CRNCH
CRNCH
CRNCH
ONCE I'M OUT OF THESE WOODS...
I'LL BE IN KOUGA TERRITORY.

THIS VILLAGE WILL NEVER PROSPER WITH YOUR VIOLENT WAYS, ELDER BROTHER!
HMPH
SO YOU'RE ...
...GOING TO TELL THE IGA NINJA...
YOU MUST TAKE CARE OF THE LOW-RANKING NINJA MORE...
...THEN YOU SHOULD KILL ME AND BECOME THE LEADER INSTEAD...
IF THAT'S THE WAY YOU WANT TO RUN THE PLACE...
WHY DO YOU ALWAYS...
I GUESS YOU CAN'T DO IT ANYMORE.
YOU USED TO BE A TIGER, BUT EVER SINCE YOU MARRIED THAT WOMAN...
...YOU'VE TURNED INTO A MERE CAT.

THIS INCIDENT...
I'LL TAKE FULL RESPONSIBILITY AND HAVE THEM RETURNED TO IGA.

AND YOU'RE GOING TO BELIEVE THEM...?
THEY HAVE ALL AGREED TO FORGET ABOUT EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED HERE...

AND HOW WOULD THEY FIND OUT?
YES.
EVEN IF WE KILL THEM, THE IGA NINJA WILL QUICKLY FIND OUT ABOUT IT.

YOU'RE USELESS!!
WHY DIDN'T YOU KILL THEM RIGHT AWAY?
WHIMP
IF YOU HAD SUCCEEDED IN GETTING RID OF THEM...
I'M SORRY...
GOEMON AND THAT HERBALIST ARE A GREAT ASSET TO IGA!
BAM
LORD NOBUNAGA WOULD HAVE BEEN VERY PLEASED!
STEP...
URGH

AS SOON AS GOEMON RECOVERS, I'LL SEND THEM BACK TO IGA.
SHHHK
AT YOUR SIDE.
TP
HIKARU.
I ACTUALLY LIKE THE WAY I AM RIGHT NOW.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME.
...!!
WHOK

I BECAME RIHEI'S WIFE TO FIND OUT ABOUT THE KOUGA CLAN'S MOVES.
EIGHT YEARS AGO...
TUP
BUT THE KOUGA CLAN ISN'T OUR ENEMY...
FOR IGA ...?!
THEY ARE.
THE KOUGA CLAN IS CONNECTED TO ODA NOBUNAGA.

DO YOU KNOW SUZUNE, GOEMON?!
I DON'T.
I WAS READING HER LIPS. SHE TOLD ME TO MAKE SOMETHING UP...
LIP-READING?
IT'S A SKILL WHERE YOU FIND OUT WHAT A PERSON'S SAYING FROM THE MOVEMENT OF THEIR LIPS.

KEEP YOUR BIG MOUTH SHUT!!
WHAP
HANZO DOESN'T EVEN KNOW THAT HIS SISTER'S MARRIED TO SOMEBODY IN THE KOUGA CLAN...

AND DON'T TELL HANZO WHAT HAPPENED HERE.
HUH?!
GET OUT OF THIS PLACE AS SOON AS YOU FINISH EATING THIS!
Here are your weapons
HURRAY, RICE BALLS! ♪
SISTER...
OWW

You're sweating
GOEMON, ARE YOU OKAY?
SISTER, AREN'T YOU GOING TO ESCAPE WITH US?
I'M FINE.

GRAB
HEY...
I STILL HAVEN'T EATEN...
HURRY UP!!

HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN THAT I'M RIHEI'S WIFE?

YOU REALLY LOVE RIHEI, DON'T YOU?
SISTER...

YOU JUST NEED TO BE PREPARED SO THAT IT'LL NEVER HAPPEN.
I DON'T WANT A WAR...

SHHHK
RIGHT NOW, YOU NEED TO BE THINKING ABOUT GETTING BACK TO IGA.
HANZO IS ALWAYS READY FOR THAT.
THEN YOU SHOULD TELL HANZO...

OOH
A SECRET PASSAGE...
SQUEEK
YOU CAN GET TO THE BACK OF THE HOUSE THROUGH HERE.

THE KOUGA CLAN AND ODA NOBUNAGA ...?!
I'LL CONTACT YOU THE MINUTE I FIND OUT IF NOBUNAGA IS GOING TO ATTACK IGA.

IT MUST BE NICE TO BE A LOVING, MARRIED COUPLE...
RIHEI SEEMS TO BE DEEPLY IN LOVE WITH HER TOO.

PANT
PANT
WHAT'S WRONG?
IT...IT'S NOTHING...
BMP
OOF
FLIRT
FLIRT
I WANT TO BE LIKE THAT WITH HANZO...

PANT
PANT
PANT
I'M GOING TO MAKE HIM REST AS SOON AS WE GET OUT OF KOUGA.
HE'S STILL EXPERIENCING THE SIDE EFFECTS OF THAT POTION...
GOEMON...

SCAN
SCAN
HMM...?
RUN OVER TO THAT BUSH OVER THERE!
TUP
SHH

SLAM
OUCH
BMP
SIST...
WHACK
STOP THAT CHATTERING AND GET OUT OF THIS PLACE!!
OWW
WHOA.

I KNEW IT. SHE DOES LOVE HIM.
WALK STRAIGHT AHEAD!!
WAAARGH, IT'S SO DARK...
IT'S NOT SOMETHING YOU CAN PRETEND TO DO...
THAT EXPRESSION ON HER FACE WHEN SHE WAS LOOKING AT RIHEI...

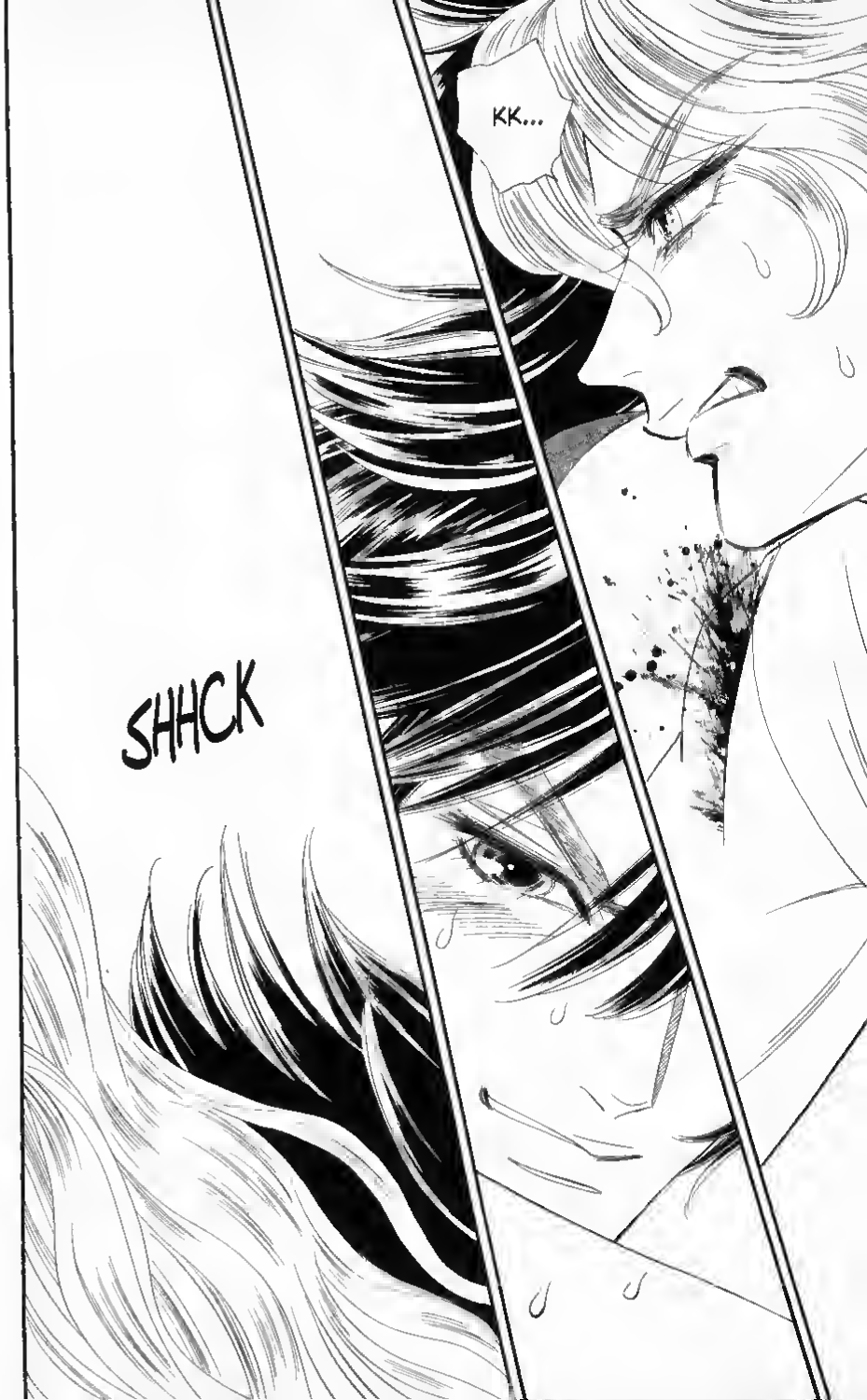
SHAKY
DASH
RUSH
IT DOESN'T MATTER TO ME, REALLY.
GOEMON !!
KSH
HT

I WONDER WHY YOU OUTSIDERS ARE COMING OUT OF THAT SECRET PASSAGE...
TP
HIKARU !!

GET BACK!!
TUP
IT'S HIDDEN AWAY SO THAT NOBODY CAN FIND IT.

HFF
HFF
SHHH
MAYBE SOMEONE SHOWED YOU THE WAY OUT?

BOSHU
GOEMON!!
FUNE


KK...
SHHCK

WISH
!!
ZOOOOO

FLIP
HANG IN THERE!!
GOEMON!
GOEMON ...!!
GOOD-BYE...
...MY ANGEL.

HANZO
!!
oooo!!

HUR...
HH
HK
KK...

Tail of the Moon

Chapter 39

TAIL OF THE MOON EXTRA: TODAY'S MISSION

"I WANT HANZO TO BE THE BOSS AT MY OFFICE!"

-AYAYAN, AKITA PREFECTURE

I'LL PROBABLY BE TOO BUSY WATCHING HANZO TO DO ANY WORK... ♥♥
MISSION ACCOMPLISHED!
SECTION CHIEF HATTORI, LET'S PLAY VOLLEYBALL DURING LUNCH BREAK...
TROMP
TROMP
NO.
I HAVE TO HEAD TO UMIYAMA TRADING CO. NEXT...

MMP...
...DON'T... KILL HIM...
D...
KEEP YOUR EYES CLOSED.
!!
PLEASE...
DON'T...
...KILL... HIKARU...

SHHN
HANZO...?!
USAGI...
YANK
UNGH...

UE-RIN'S WAY OF THE MANGA ③

Back then, there was quite a lot of people who made their shojo manga debut in high school or middle school. Every time I read about people like that in the "Manga School" section, I

And once again, with that brassy attitude of mine, I got started

I bought a How to Draw Manga book by Hikaru Yuzuki, a former *RIBON* manga artist. In that book it said, "When drawing people, you should start with the eyes." So without a shadow of a doubt, I started practicing that way.

I still draw starting with the eyes

!!
KOTONE!!
STAY INSIDE THE HOUSE!!
HANZO?!
SHFF
SHFF
DAR-LING...
...DID YOU CALL ME?

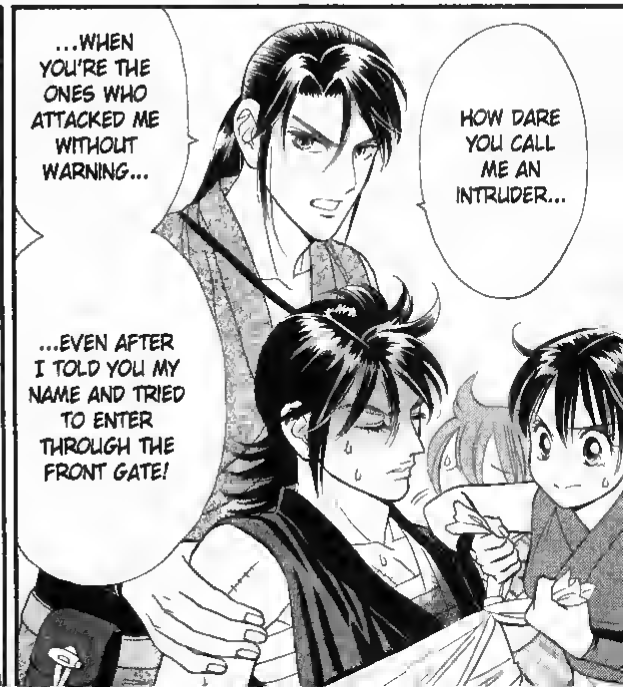
IT'S NOTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT!!
WHA...
...WHAT HAPPENED ...?!

GET BACK INSIDE THE HOUSE RIGHT AWAY!!

WHAT IS IT THIS TIME...?!
TMP
KOTONE...
IS KOTONE ALL RIGHT ?!

HE'S THE INTRUDER WHO ATTACKED US!!
IT'S HIM!!

Y... YOU'RE...
HANZO...
...HELP ME GET GOEMON INSIDE!!


...WHEN YOU'RE THE ONES WHO ATTACKED ME WITHOUT WARNING...
HOW DARE YOU CALL ME AN INTRUDER...
...EVEN AFTER I TOLD YOU MY NAME AND TRIED TO ENTER THROUGH THE FRONT GATE!

GOEMON...
...HERE'S A PAIN-KILLER.
THANKS, SASUKE!!

URGH...
I PROMISE THAT I'LL HELP YOU GET BETTER!!
YOU'RE GOING TO BE OKAY....

HANG IN THERE, GOEMON!!

OUR LEADER WOULD LIKE TO MEET YOU...
MASTER HANZO...

REMEMBER HOW YUKI STITCHED UP THAT STOMACH BEFORE?
YOU'RE GOING TO STITCH HIS STOMACH UP?!
I'M GOING TO GIVE THAT A TRY!!
OHH...
URGH...

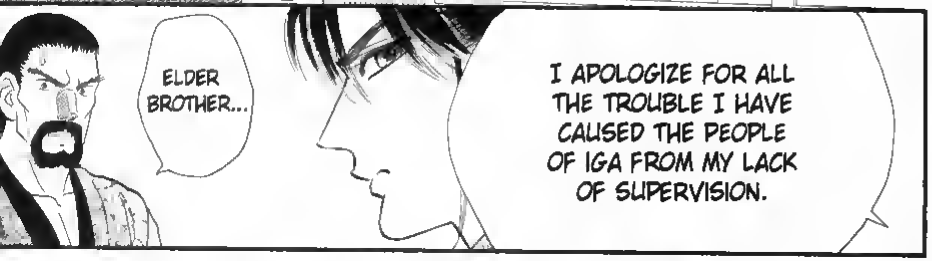
GET ME A NEEDLE, STRING, AND AS MUCH CLOTH AS YOU CAN FIND!!
BLOT
BLOT
MMPH...

...
I CAN'T HELP IT... I HARDLY HAVE ANY MEDICINE WITH ME!!
IT LOOKS LIKE GOEMON'S REALLY IN PAIN...

THE ONES YOU STOLE FROM MY ROOM...
HEY...
KEE, KEE...
FWWP
IT'S USA'S MEDICINE.
FWWP

KEE...
ZW
SASUKE!!

SHHK
AND YOU HAVE GOOD REASON TO BE JUST SO...
I AM KANBUTSU SHINOYAMA...
...THE LEADER OF THIS VILLAGE...


I APOLOGIZE FOR ALL THE TROUBLE I HAVE CAUSED THE PEOPLE OF IGA FROM MY LACK OF SUPERVISION.
ELDER BROTHER...

THIS LOW-RANKING NINJA...
...CAUSED THIS WHOLE INCIDENT BY HIMSELF. HE IS THE ONE TO BLAME!!
...

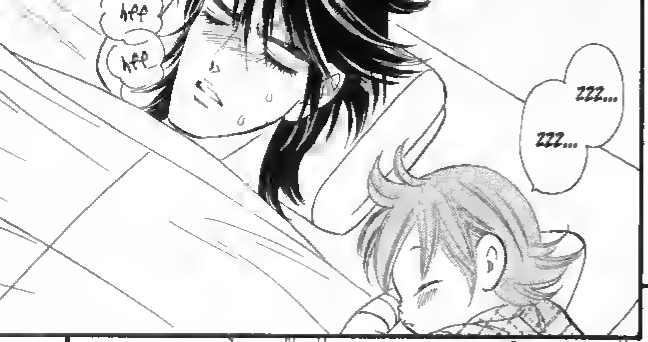
WHY MUST I BE TREATED THIS WAY...
YOU HAVE TO HURRY UP AND HELP ME OUT OF THIS.

SHHK
MASTER!!

!!

I HAVE NEVER BEEN THIS IRRITATED BEFORE IN MY LIFE.
PLEASE WAIT A LITTLE MORE...
HE'S THE ONE WHO CALLED FOR ME, SO WHY IS HE LATE?

...DO ANYTHING AGAIN TO USAGI, MY BRIDE-ELECT, THERE WILL BE NO NEXT TIME. REMEMBER THAT.
AND IF YOU EVER...
TROMP
TROMP
I UNDER-STAND...
I...
THAT HERBALIST IS YOUR BRIDE-ELECT?!
SO PLEASE FORGIVE US!!
THIS LOW-RANKING NINJA WILL TAKE RESPONSIBILITY AND BE PUT TO DEATH AT ONCE.
ELDER BROTHER...
MMPH ooo
I ONLY HOPE TO CONTINUE BEING ON GOOD TERMS WITH THE PEOPLE OF IGA...
...I HOPE THAT WE WILL NEVER BE INVOLVED WITH EACH OTHER AGAIN.
NOW THAT WE'VE MET EACH OTHER...
YOU STAY OUT OF THIS, RIHEI!!
YOU'RE BEING TOO...
ELDER BROTHER!!
MMPH!!

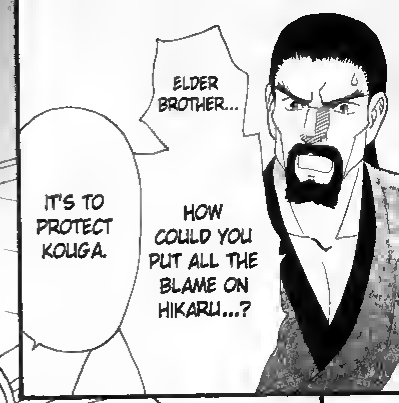

HAA
HAA

ZZZ...
ZZZ...

GOEMON'S GOING TO BE AT HIS WORST TONIGHT!!
NO.
YOU SHOULD REST TOO, USAGI.

SO IF SOMETHING GOES WRONG...
...
GOEMON...
...MIGHT NOT MAKE IT...

HIKARU...
AS A WAY OF APOLOGY, YOU'RE GOING TO DIE IN FRONT OF HANZO TOMORROW.


ELDER BROTHER...
HOW COULD YOU PUT ALL THE BLAME ON HIKARU...?
IT'S TO PROTECT KOUGA.

A SKILLED NINJA WOULD NEVER HAVE FAILED TO KILL GOEMON.
SKILLED?
BUT WE CANNOT AFFORD TO LOSE A SKILLED NINJA LIKE HIKARU...

EVEN THE MONKEY IS BETTER THAN HIM.

IT'S STRANGE...
YOU'RE RIGHT...
HANZO...
WHEN I'M NEAR YOU, HANZO...
I FEEL COMFORTABLE, LIKE I'M BACK HOME...

THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE EVER OPERATED ON SOME-ONE...
USAGI.
...I FAILED, THEN...
IF...

YOU DID YOUR BEST, USAGI.
WE CAN ONLY PRAY FOR GOEMON TO GET BETTER NOW.

I'M SO GLAD...
THANK YOU, HANZO...
SHHK
OH.
SORRY, I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE BUSY.
SIS...
I mean
SWIP
KOTONE, PLEASE WAIT!!
ZZZ...

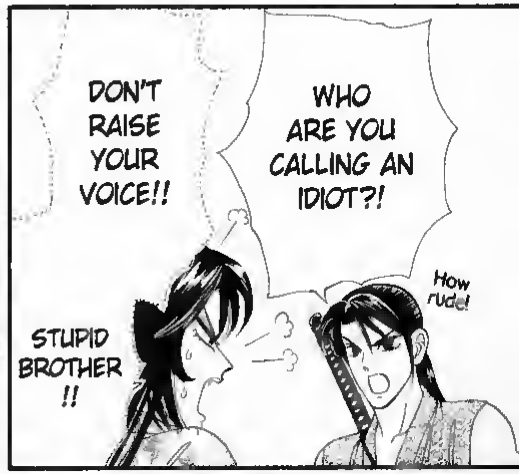
HOME IS WHERE I AM, USAGI.
MY HOME IS WHERE YOU ARE...

NO, I HAVEN'T...
I JUST CAME BACK...
...AND ONLY FOUND THE ROPE...
KABOOM

HATTORI HANZO OF IGA COMING TO THIS VILLAGE WITHOUT SO MUCH AS A DISGUISE... AND THROUGH THE FRONT GATE, NO LESS...
I'M SURPRISED.

MOUTHS
WORDS
WHAT AN IDIOT.

ZWAK
YOUR JOB IS TO THINK ABOUT THE SAFETY AND PROSPERITY OF IGA.
KOTONE.
HAVE YOU SEEN HIKARU?!


DON'T RAISE YOUR VOICE!!
WHO ARE YOU CALLING AN IDIOT?!
How rude!
STUPID BROTHER !!

...AM SURPRISED TO SEE THAT YOU'VE MARRIED A MAN FROM KOUGA.
I, TOO...
Stupid brother !!

KRA BOOM
W...
WE'RE UNDER ATTACK...
EVERY-BODY...
GET OUT AT ONCE...
FSSHAA A
I...
I DON'T BELIEVE THIS...!!

DASH
THAT EXPLOSION...
WHAT?!
DARLING!!
HMM...
ZWAK
FOOSH
KRKKL
KRKKL
WHAT...!!

KRRK
KRRK
...BUT NOT THIS TIME.
HIKARU ?!

FOO
SHH
HIKARU!!
WH...
WHO COULD HAVE DONE SUCH A THING...?
HELP ME PUT THE FIRE OUT AT ONCE, HIKARU!!
KRRK...
MASTER...
YOUR WISH IS MY COMMAND...

Tail of the Moon™

Chapter 40

TAIL OF THE MOON EXTRA: TODAY'S MISSION

"I WANT TO SEE YURI AS A BEAUTIFUL NURSE."

-GOEMON, SHIMANE PREFECTURE

SHE MAY BE PRETTY, BUT I DON'T THINK I WANT TO BE HER PATIENT...
MAMEZO... IT'S TIME TO SHOW THE MAN INSIDE OF YOU...
OKAY, HERE GOES... ♪
WAAAAARGH
MISSION ACCOMPLISHED!

DO YOU REALLY THINK YOU CAN KILL ME WITH A MERE FIRE ARROW...?!
KSHOOM
FWP
WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE SHOOTING ?!
TOK
TSH
HA HA HA
?!
KPAK

HIKARU...
...HAVE YOU GONE MAD...?!
CHK
WHY...
...ARE YOU TRYING TO KILL ME...?

UE-RIN'S WAY OF THE MANGA ④

Then came the painting tools. Since I lived in the countryside of Nara, I had no idea where I could buy paper and dip pens. I asked my art teacher about it and spent what little I had to buy the minimum necessities to draw manga.

(Kent paper, pen holder, pen nib)

For those who want to draw mangas but don't know where to buy materials, you should ask your art teacher.

As I wondered whether to apply to *Ribon* or *Margaret* (both of which I was buying back then), I noticed that *Ribon* came out once a month whereas *Margaret* came out four times a month. This meant that there was a higher chance for me on *Margaret*, and that is why I chose it. I wasn't smart, but I sure was a very calculating 8th grader.

Hi... how embarrassing

KRSHAA
THE VILLAGE...!!
THERE'S...
...A LOT OF INJURED PEOPLE DOWN THERE!!
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?!
DASH
I CAN UNDERSTAND WHY HIKARU WAS TRYING TO KILL ME AND GOEMON...
...BUT WHY WOULD HE TRY TO HARM THE PEOPLE OF KOUGA...?
USAGI!!

WE SHOULD GO UPWIND FOR NOW...
COUGH
RI...
RIGHT...
DARLING, HELP US!!
COUGH

ELDER BROTHER?!

HIKARU?!
HIKARU DID THIS?!
OHH!
WH...WHO DID THIS TO YOU...?
rasp
IT...
rasp
IT'S...
...HI-KARU...
DASH
ELDER BROTHER!!

OW
HERBALIST...
YOU... YOU'RE SAFE NOW...
AARGH
THUMP
KRRRK
KRRRK
AAHHH
KRRK
HUH?
OWW
OW
SHAA
TUP

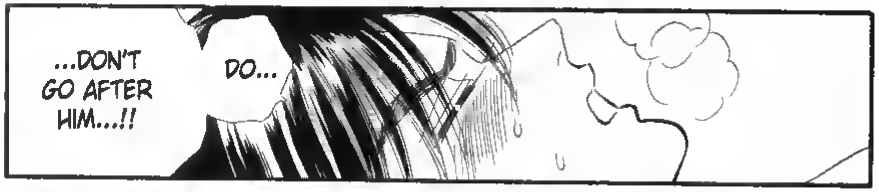
KRRR
AGH!
SHAA
IT'S HOT!
IS EVERYONE OKAY?!
HERBALIST!!
I'LL HELP YOU...
TMP TMP
COUGH
COUGH
EIYAA!
TSHH
AAAAAAH...
COUGH
COUGH
KEEP LOW SO THAT YOU DON'T BREATHE IN THE SMOKE AND...
!!

HI... HIKARU !!
WHY DID YOU SET FIRE TO YOUR OWN VILLAGE?!
I WONDER WHERE HE'S RUN OFF TO?
OW OW
HI... HIKARU...
...WHY...
UMM...
HH...
HAVE YOU SEEN SASUKE?
NO, I HAVEN'T...

AAAAAH
KR DOOM
TUP

HANG IN THERE, ELDER BROTHER!!
This is terrible...
SU...
...SURE!!
HERBALIST...
PLEASE TAKE A LOOK AT MY BROTHER !!
WHY DID YOU HELP US...?

URGH...
I'VE SENT MEN OUT TO PURSUE HIKARU!!


...DON'T GO AFTER HIM...!!!
DO...

HAA
PANT
...WHO'S BEEN CRUEL TO HIKARU...
THE ONE...
WHY?!
HIKARU'S BEEN SO CRUEL TO EVERYBODY!
GOEMON...
DON'T...
...GO AFTER HIKARU...

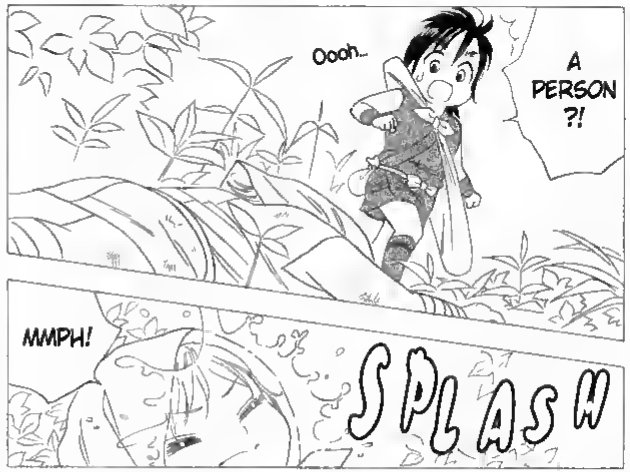
OH...
USAGI, WHERE ARE YOU?!
I JUST WANT TO BRING AN END TO EVERYTHING...

HIKARU, WHY...
USAGI!!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
HIKARU...
FSH

I...
I...
I'M NOT AN OGRE...
WHOA!

SURE I'M SURPRISED.
YOUR HAIR'S REAL PRETTY.
AR... AREN'T YOU SURPRISED TO SEE ME?
I CAN SEE THAT.
Dry yourself
SCRUB SCRUB

I CAN'T WAIT TO GET BACK HOME AND SEE HOW USAGI'S DOING...
HUH?
TP
TP
I TOOK THE SHORTCUT THROUGH KOUGA, BUT IT WASN'T DANGEROUS AT ALL...


Oooh..
A PERSON ?!
MMPH!
SPLASH

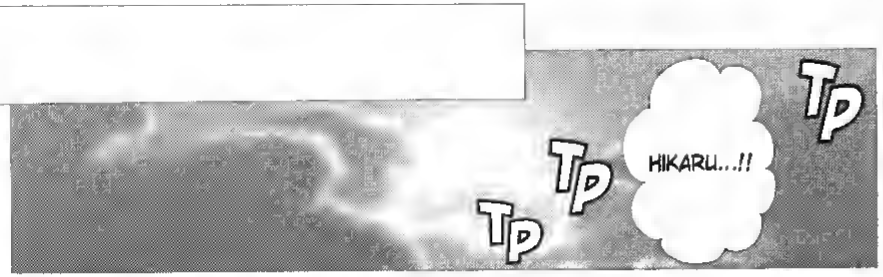
TUG
USE THAT TOWEL TO DRY YOURSELF.
!!

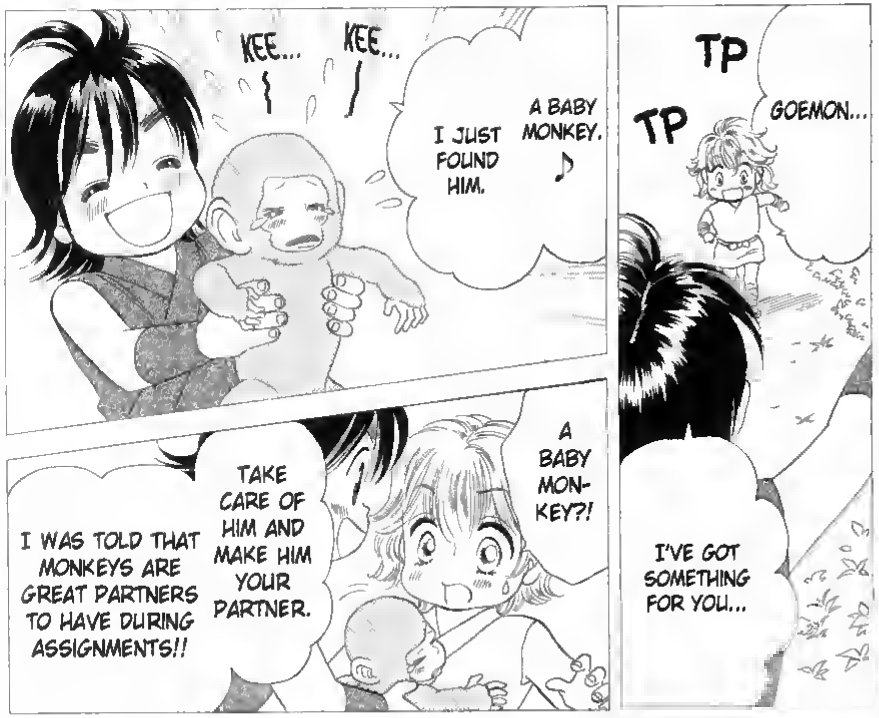
FWSH
DON'T!!

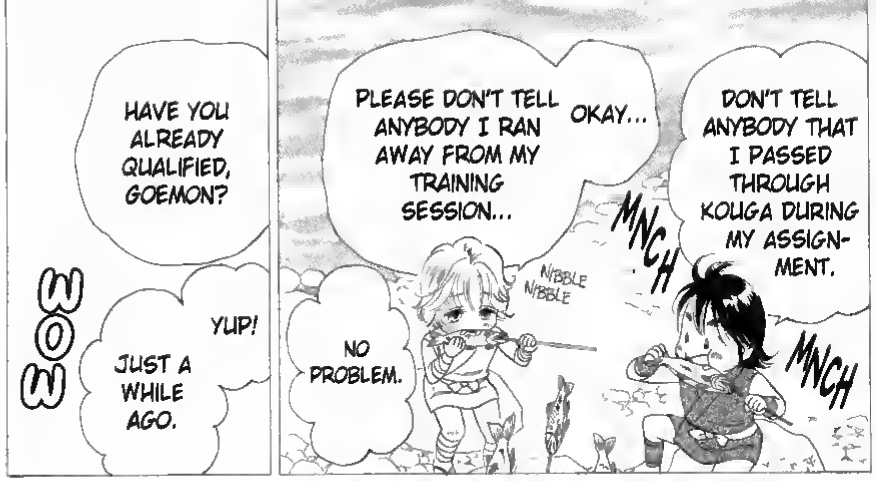
He's alive.
OH!
SHOOM
Hurk
Cough

...IS ME...
THIRTEEN YEARS AGO
TP
TP
TP

REALLY...?
I'M FREE ON NIGHTS WITH A FULL MOON, SO I CAN MEET YOU THEN.
LET'S SEE...
WI... WILL I BE ABLE TO MEET YOU AGAIN...?
Ooh, I'm full
WELL THEN, I SHOULD GET GOING.


TP
TP
TP
HIKARU...!!


KEE...
KEE...
I JUST FOUND HIM.
A BABY MONKEY. ♪
I WAS TOLD THAT MONKEYS ARE GREAT PARTNERS TO HAVE DURING ASSIGNMENTS!!
TAKE CARE OF HIM AND MAKE HIM YOUR PARTNER.
A BABY MON-KEY?!
TP
TP
GOEMON...
I'VE GOT SOMETHING FOR YOU...


HAVE YOU ALREADY QUALIFIED, GOEMON?
WOW
YUP! JUST A WHILE AGO.
PLEASE DON'T TELL ANYBODY I RAN AWAY FROM MY TRAINING SESSION...
OKAY...
NO PROBLEM.
NIBBLE NIBBLE
MNCH
DON'T TELL ANYBODY THAT I PASSED THROUGH KOUGA DURING MY ASSIGN-MENT.
MNCH

SHE'S STILL A BABY, BUT SHE'S REAL CUTE. ♪
A TRAINING WHERE I HAD TO HAVE MY FIANCÉE ON MY BACK FOR TWO YEARS.
GRIN
PI... PIGGY-BACK TRAINING ...?
I FINISHED MY PIGGYBACK TRAINING AND WAS FINALLY ABLE TO BE QUALIFIED!!

Have some of the big fish!!
TRAINING'S HARD FOR EVERYBODY.
IF WE DON'T TRAIN HARD, WE'RE NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO STAY ALIVE!!
I HAVE TO GROW UP QUICKLY AND BECOME A FINE NINJA FOR USAGI'S SAKE!!
LUCKY...
I WISH I HAD SOMEBODY LIKE THAT SO I COULD TRAIN HARDER...

FOR REAL?!
I'VE... QUALIFIED AS A NINJA...
NO.
DID THEY FIND OUT THAT YOU WERE SEEING ME?!
NO...
OOH...
THEN YOU GOT WOUNDED DURING AN ASSIGN-MENT?
THAT'S GREAT...

SNIFF
I DON'T WANT TO BE IN KOUGA ANYMORE!!
YOU CAN'T QUALIFY AS A NINJA JUST FROM BEING FAVORED, CAN YOU?!
WHO IN THE WORLD HIT YOU...?
SNIFF
SNIFF
EWWWW

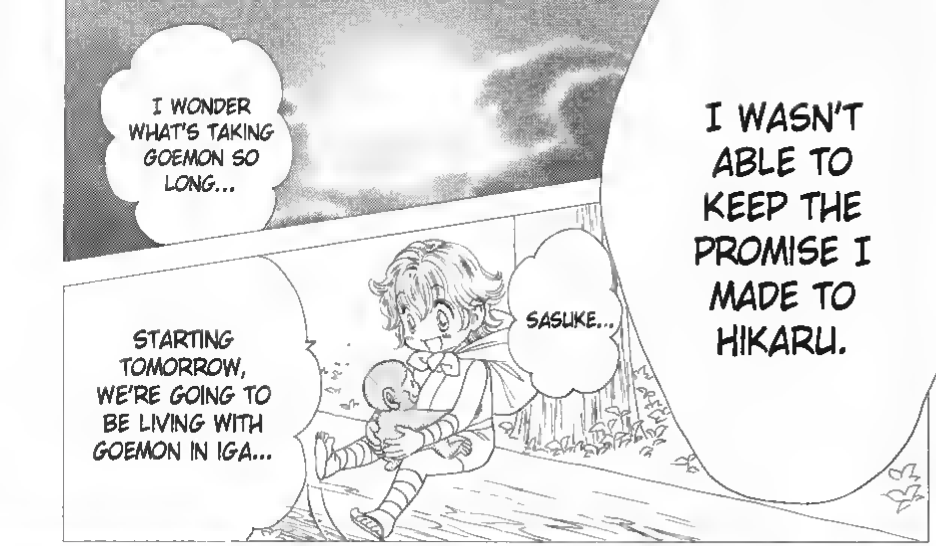
EV... EVERYBODY KEPT SAYING... THAT I WAS ONLY ABLE TO QUALIFY BECAUSE THE MASTER FAVORS ME... AND THEY...
SNIFF
SNIFF

WAAARGH
WHA... WHAT'S WRONG?!

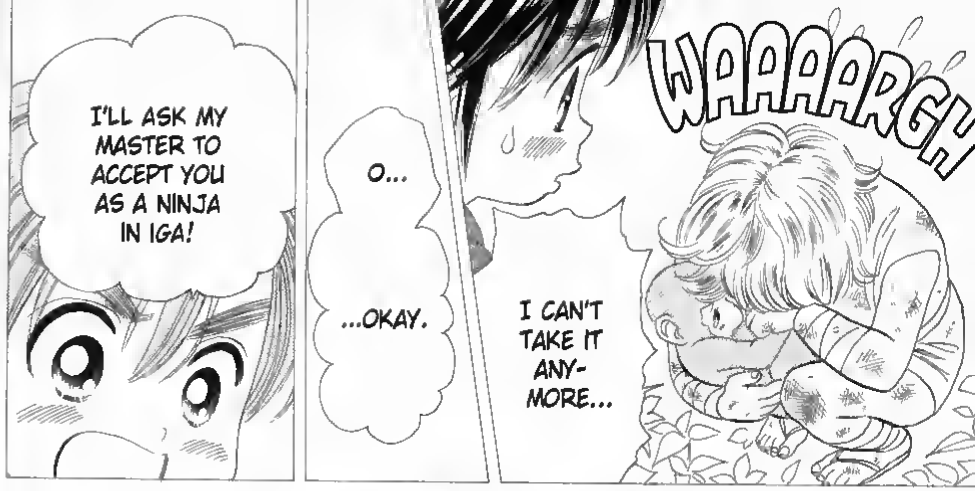
THAT'S TOO FINE OF A NAME FOR A MONKEY ...
I DON'T LIKE MATA...I'LL CALL HIM SASUKE!!
HOW'S MATABEI SOUND?
LET'S GIVE HIM A NAME.
NOT FOR MY PARTNER!!
AWEE...
A PARTNER...

LIMP
LIMP
YOU'RE STILL HERE...
THANK GOOD-NESS...
I'M SORRY I'M LATE...
HIKARU...
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?!
LIMP
LIMP

SEVERAL MONTHS LATER
HIKARU...
WHAT TOOK YOU SO LONG...?


I WONDER WHAT'S TAKING GOEMON SO LONG...
I WASN'T ABLE TO KEEP THE PROMISE I MADE TO HIKARU.
STARTING TOMORROW, WE'RE GOING TO BE LIVING WITH GOEMON IN IGA...
SASUKE...

...
WE'RE GOING TO BE TOGETHER WITH GOEMON EVEN ON DAYS WITHOUT A FULL MOON...


I'LL ASK MY MASTER TO ACCEPT YOU AS A NINJA IN IGA!
O...
...OKAY.
I CAN'T TAKE IT ANY-MORE...
WAAAARGH

I'LL COME PICK YOU UP WHEN THE NEXT FULL MOON RISES, SO DON'T CRY ANYMORE!
SNIFF
AN IGA NINJA...?
OKAY!
OBVIOUSLY, MASTER NEVER APPROVED OF IT...
...AND HE FORBADE ME FROM SEEING HIKARU AGAIN...

KEE...
KEE...
SASUKE!!
KEEE...
SHWIP
KEE...!
SASUKE?!
SHHP
!!

HE'S NEVER BEEN ABLE TO TRUST ANYBODY EXCEPT HIMSELF, AND HE'S STILL TORMENTED BY THAT...
WHERE ARE YOU, SASUKE...?
HIKARU...
...HAS ALWAYS... HAD HIS HANDS FULL JUST PROTECTING HIMSELF...
SASUKE...
GSH
GSH

SOME-
BODY...
...SET
HIKARU
FREE...
KEE...
KEE...
WHUMP
WHOK

SAVE
HIKARU
...!!
SOME-
BODY...
KEE...
KEE...
WHOK
WHUMP

Tail of the Moon

Chapter 41

TAIL OF THE MOON EXTRA: TODAY'S MISSION

"I WANT TO SEE GREAT-GRANDPA AS A MAGICIAN."

-GREAT-GRANDPA FAN, NARA PREFECTURE

I WISH HE'D SET HANZO'S HEART ON FIRE FOR ME...
MISSION ACCOMPLISHED!
WOW
GREAT-GRANDPA, YOU CAN EVEN USE MAGIC?!
IT'S WHAT YOU CALL AN ILLUSION... ♪
FWOOSH

TAIL OF THE MOON EXTRA: TODAY'S MISSION

"I WANT TO SEE USAGI IN GOTHIC LOLITA FASHION."

-KAATA, OKINAWA PREFECTURE

IT'S VERY GAUDY BUT VERY C... CUTE...
Well, sort of...
I'M REALLY GLAD THAT HANZO SEEMS TO HAVE LIKED IT. ♡
USA, YOU LOOK LIKE A DOLL! ♡
MISSION ACCOMPLISHED!

SHHM
YES!
WAIT...
USE THIS POTION!!
POTION?
IT'S POISON...
USE THE POISON THAT HIKARU FORCED ME TO MAKE...

PLEASE...
DON'T KILL HIKARU...!!
YOU MUSTN'T MOVE, GOEMON.
TMP
TMP
WE'VE CAPTURED HIKARU!!
YEE... YEE...
WHUMP
HIKARU!!
KILL HIM.
RIHEI, WHAT DO YOU WANT US TO DO WITH HIM?
RASP...
RASP...

UE-RIN'S WAY OF THE MANGA ⑤

Back then, I didn't know the basics of drawing manga, including creating the storyboard first. I went straight to drawing manga onto drawing paper and had to squeeze my story within the number of pages I had to turn in.

All the mistakes Usagi is making on "Ue-Rin's Manga School" (currently being serialized in *Margaret*) are mistakes that I actually did.

As for the result of the first manga I drew at night while attending middle school...

See you in volume 7

Rinko Ueda

THUMP
HFF...
KEE...
HIKARU...
DRINK THIS ANTIDOTE.
THAT WAS AN ASPHYXIATION POTION.
WHAT?!
PANT
PANT
DI... DIDN'T I...
...DIE...?
YOU DID.

HAVEN'T WE COME FAR ENOUGH?
TWITCH
CRNCH
KEE KEE!
USAGI!
I'M SURPRISED...
I DIDN'T KNOW YOU COULD BE THIS BOLD, USAGI...
CRNCH
CRNCH
CRNCH
COUGH
WHA... WHAT?!
COUGH
HE'S COME BACK TO LIFE.
KEE...

HA
HA
HIKARU?
...CAN GOEMON BE...?
HOW STUPID...
HA
USAGI?!
GOEMON WANTED YOU TO BE FREE...
I'M THE ONE...
...WHO TRIED TO END OUR FRIENDSHIP IN THE FIRST PLACE...

YOU DIED ONCE, HIKARU.
BUT YOU'VE BEEN REBORN JUST NOW.
YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE DEAD IN KOUGA, SO YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO COME BACK HERE ANYMORE...
...BUT YOU'RE FREE, HIKARU.

I'LL...
...WISH FOR GOEMON'S HAPPINESS TOO...
YOU TAKE CARE, TOO...
TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF.
Take this ointment with you
I'LL ALWAYS BE FINE.
I have a lot of stomach troubles though.

GOEMON IS STILL YOUR FRIEND, HIKARU.
ALL HE WISHED FOR IS FOR YOU TO BE HAPPY...

NNGH
ELDER BROTHER!!
I'M GOEMON'S ...?
OKAY...
MM...
DO YOU RECOGNIZE ME?!
ELDER BROTHER!!
AS LONG AS YOU'RE ALIVE, YOU CAN ALWAYS MAKE A FRESH START!!
HM...
I THOUGHT... ...IT WAS A BAD DREAM BUT...
THE MASTER'S REGAINED CONSCIOUS-NESS!!
MASTER !!

YOU'RE THE SOURCE OF GOEMON'S HAPPINESS...
TAKE CARE OF GOEMON FOR ME.
HI... HIKARU?!
LET'S HEAD BACK.
...

SWP
Mommy?
ARE THEY YOUR MEN, MASTER HANZO?
HUFF
HUFF
OH...
WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN KOUGA, MASTER HANZO?!
!!

IS THAT...
HUH...
YE... YES.

WHOA!
SUZU...
CRACK
I KNOW IT'S A TOUGH TIME FOR YOU, BUT I THINK IT IS ABOUT TIME FOR US TO RETURN TO IGA.

I AM VERY SORRY...
...FOR THIS WHOLE INCIDENT.
MASTER HANZO...

WE CAN CARRY HIM BACK ON THE TATAMI MAT.
WHAT ABOUT GOEMON?

WAAARGH
WAAARGH
WAAARGH
DADDY...
MOMMY...

KASANO-SUKE!!
HATSUNE !!
!!

YOU IDIOT!!
THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE HEARD WHAT THE TRIPLETS ARE CALLED...
SLAP
YOU KIDS... PLEASE COME BACK...!!

DID YOU COME BACK HERE ALL BY YOUR-SELVES?
MATSUNOSUKE, TAKENOSUKE, AND UMENOSUKE ARE WITH YOU TOO!!
UH-HUH!!

KOTONE...
...THANK YOU FOR EVERYTHING!!
BOW
TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF.
TAKE CARE, EVERY-BODY...
SEE YOU, UNCLE HANZO...!!
MAME, DON'T FORGET ME...

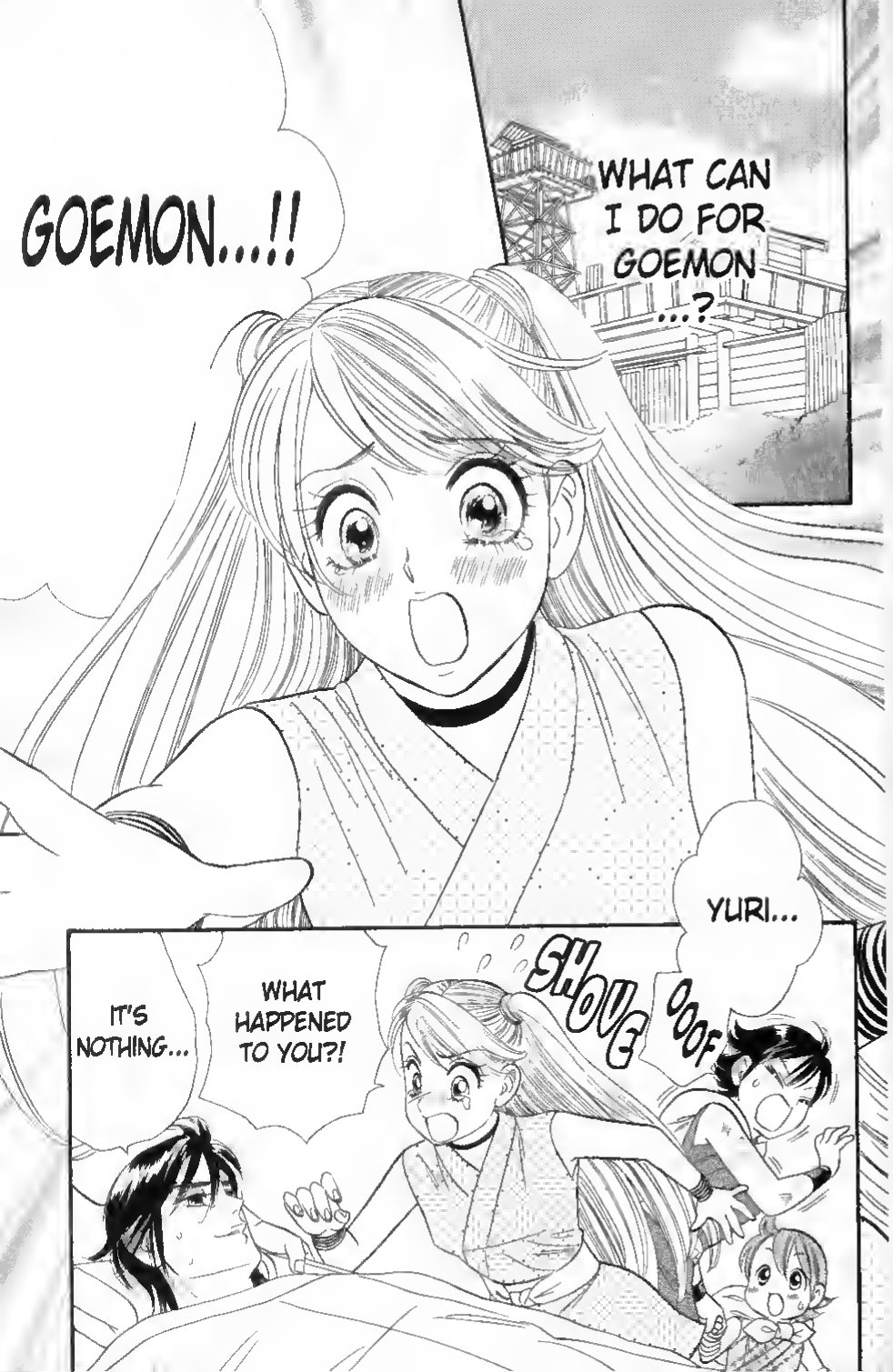
NOT AT ALL. I HAVE LEARNED A GREAT DEAL FROM ALL OF THIS.
THE ROLE OF A LEADER...
...IS TO CARE FOR HIS MEN AT ALL TIMES AND TO GUIDE THEM IN AN ORDERLY MANNER.
CARE FOR?!
No way
YOU'LL DO FINE, MASTER HANZO.

SNIFF
SIS...
GL
ARE
OH!

YE... YES...
I HOPE YOU WILL BE ABLE TO MARRY YOUR BRIDE-ELECT WITHOUT FURTHER DELAY, MASTER HANZO.
!!

...IT DOESN'T MAKE A DIFFERENCE BECAUSE YOU'RE MY WIFE.
NO MATTER WHO YOU MAY BE, KOTONE...
DARLING...
GOEMON...
WE'LL BE BACK IN IGA SOON.
AND HIKARU ...?
MMPH...
DON'T TELL ANYONE ABOUT IT.
I WAS SO SURPRISED TO SEE THAT SUZUNE HAD MARRIED A MAN FROM KOUGA...

UH...
I'M SO HAPPY TO SEE YOU BOTH SAYING GOODBYE TO THEM...
I...
UH-HUH.
MAME...
KOTONE...
DON'T WORRY.
TH-THUMP
TH-THUMP
TH-THUMP


GOEMON...!!
WHAT CAN I DO FOR GOEMON ...?
YURI...
SHOVE
OOOF
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?!
IT'S NOTHING...

HE LEFT WITH SASUKE.
I SEE...
THANKS... USAGI...
AND HIKARU SAID...
"YOU'RE THE SOURCE OF GOEMON'S HAPPINESS...."
...
...
?
H...HE TOLD ME TO TELL YOU TO TAKE CARE.

I DON'T WANT USAGI'S TREE TO WITHER AWAY.
YOU'VE JUST COME BACK AND WHAT DO YOU DO...
TRICKLE TRICKLE

ASK HER?
BEFORE DOING THAT, YOU SHOULD ASK HER TO MARRY YOU.

THAT'S A CRIME, HANZOU.
WELL, THE WAY I DO IT IS...FIRST YOU PUSH THE GIRL DOWN AND THEN KISS...
AND IT'S STILL NOT THE RIGHT TIME TO ASK HER YET!!
THAT SERIOUSLY HURT...

YOU'VE BEEN DOING A LOT OF RESEARCH ON HOW TO PROPOSE TO HER, RIGHT?
JOLT

BICKER
IT'S PROBABLY YOUR FAULT THAT HE'S HURT AGAIN ANYWAY...!!
HE'S SUPPOSED TO BE RESTING PEACEFULLY IN BED!!
BICKER

EEEEEEK
OWW!
GOEMON, YOU... YOU'RE BLEEDING ...!!
DON'T SHAKE GOEMON SO MUCH ...!!
YURI...

AGH! HIS WOUND'S OPENED UP AGAIN...!!
I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THAT RIGHT NOW...!!
USAGI...
ONCE YOU TAKE A BATH, WE'LL GET RIGHT TO PRACTICE...

TROMP
TROMP
HUH?

WHAT HAPPENED IN KOUGA?
HAAANZO! ♪

GOEMON...?
TELL ME IF IT HURTS.
I'LL GET A PAINKILLER READY RIGHT AWAY.
Let me help, too.
GET WELL QUICKLY, GOEMON...

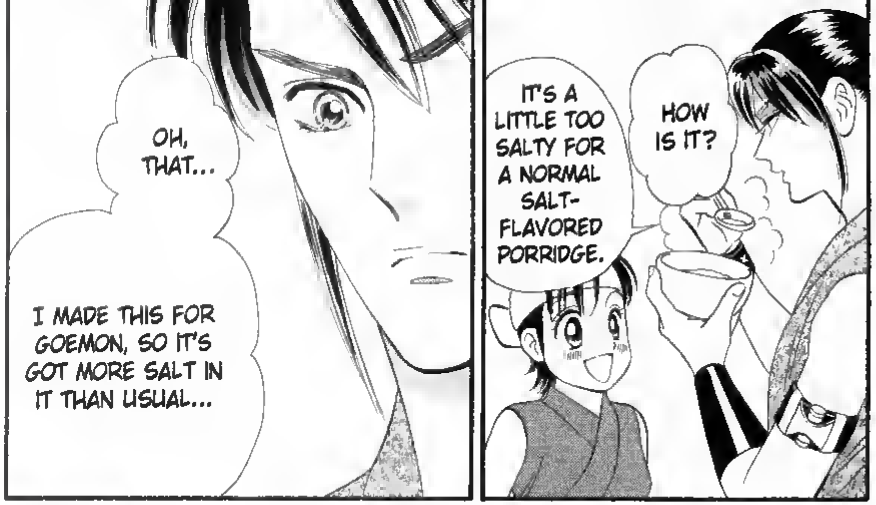
FOR GOD'S SAKE...
THE PROPOSAL AND WEDDING WILL OCCUR AFTER USAGI IS QUALIFIED AS A NINJA...
AND THAT'S FINAL.
IF YOU KEEP TAKING YOUR TIME LIKE THIS, SOMEBODY MIGHT WHISK HER AWAY FROM YOU.
NOT ME!!
YOU IDIOT!
IF YOU EVER LAY A FINGER ON USAGI...
YOU...!!
USAGI'S FORMER FIANCÉ!!

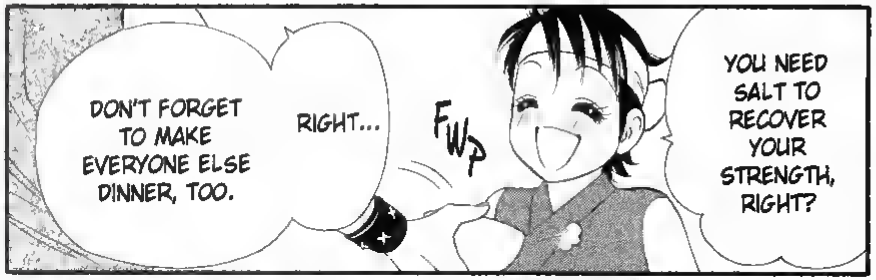
TAIL OF THE MOON EXTRA: TODAY'S MISSION

"I WANT TO SEE HANZO IN A SWIMSUIT!"

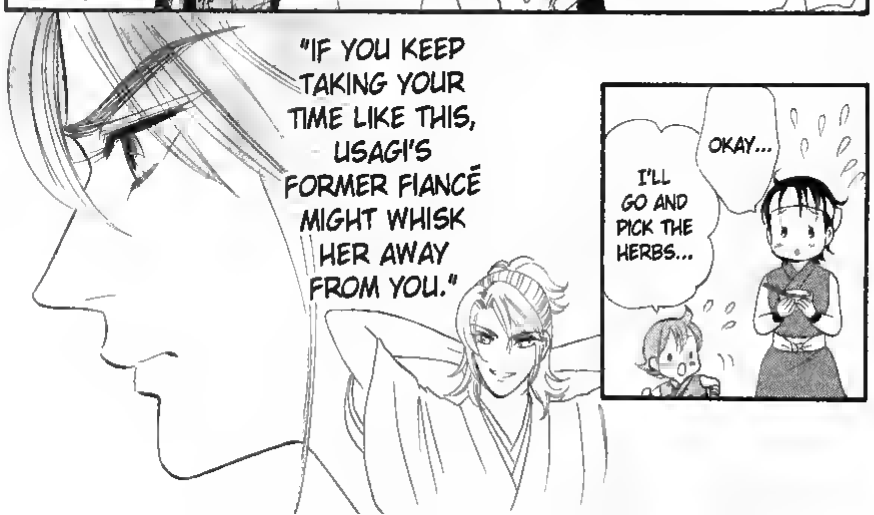
-NAOPU, AKITA PREFECTURE

I CAN'T SEE STRAIGHT WHEN HANZO'S WEARING A SPEEDO. ♡
MISSION ACCOMPLISHED!
DON'T FORGET TO WARM UP BEFORE YOU GO INTO THE SEA!
ONE...
TWO...
DRIBBLE
DRIBBLE
Usa, you've got a nose-bleed


OH, THAT...
I MADE THIS FOR GOEMON, SO IT'S GOT MORE SALT IN IT THAN USUAL...
HOW IS IT?
IT'S A LITTLE TOO SALTY FOR A NORMAL SALT-FLAVORED PORRIDGE.


DON'T FORGET TO MAKE EVERYONE ELSE DINNER, TOO.
RIGHT...
FWP
YOU NEED SALT TO RECOVER YOUR STRENGTH, RIGHT?

TROMP
TROMP
JUST DON'T FORGET TO MAKE DINNER!!
I WAS GOING TO MAKE GOEMON'S MEDICINE NEXT...
UM...


"IF YOU KEEP TAKING YOUR TIME LIKE THIS, USAGI'S FORMER FIANCÉ MIGHT WHISK HER AWAY FROM YOU."
OKAY...
I'LL GO AND PICK THE HERBS...

TROMP
TROMP
HANZO...
CAN YOU TASTE THIS...?

WELL, I PRACTICED A LOT.
WOW, YOU'RE GOOD, USA... ♪
CHOP
CHOP

MASTER HANZO ELBOWED ME RIGHT IN THE JAW, SO IT STILL HURTS.
OWW...
TROMP TROMP TROMP
WHAT NONSENSE !!

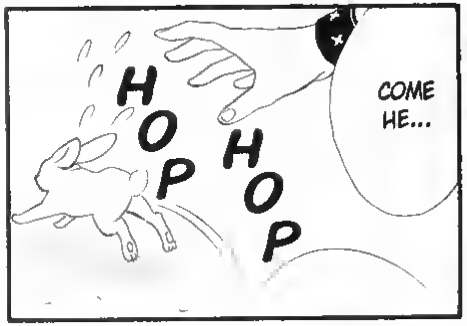
THERE ARE TIMES WHEN I CAN'T KEEP UP WITH MASTER HANZO...
YOU KNOW...
WHY DON'T YOU ASK USAGI TO MAKE YOU SOME MEDICINE?

AT THIS RATE, WHO KNOWS WHEN USAGI'S GOING TO DUMP HIM AND GO BACK TO HER VILLAGE...?
...BUT HE'S ALSO STRICT WITH OTHERS...
MASTER HANZO'S VERY STRICT WITH HIMSELF...

MA...
MASTER HANZO!!
EEEEEEK
IF YOU WANT TO TALK BEHIND SOMEBODY'S BACK, MAKE SURE THAT PERSON ISN'T WATCHING!!
YOU TWO...

TROMP TROMP
WE'RE JUST WORRIED ABOUT YOU, MASTER HANZO...
WE...WE WEREN'T TALKING BEHIND YOUR BACK.
THERE IS NO NEED FOR YOU TO BE WORRIED ABOUT ME!!
GRRAAW GRRAAW

HMM...

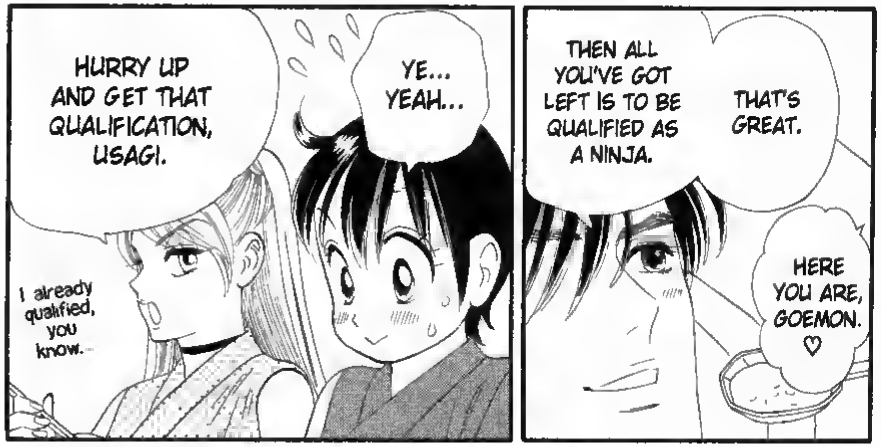

HOP HOP HOP
COME HE...

PYONKO...
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HIDING IN SUCH A PLACE?
TREMBLE

PYONKO'S DUMPED MASTER HANZO TOO...
...

I'M GOING TO FEED HIM...
Hand it over
THAT'S GREAT!
EAT WELL, GOEMON...
IT'S GOOD.

FUU
FUU
HANZO'S SISTER TAUGHT ME, AND SHE'S QUALIFIED ME FOR ALL THE HOUSEWORK...


HURRY UP AND GET THAT QUALIFICATION, USAGI.
YE... YEAH...
I already qualified, you know.
THEN ALL YOU'VE GOT LEFT IS TO BE QUALIFIED AS A NINJA.
THAT'S GREAT.
HERE YOU ARE, GOEMON. ♡

YOU KNOW, YOU MIGHT NEVER BE ABLE TO QUALIFY AND JUST GROW OLDER...
I WOULDN'T BE IN THIS TROUBLE IF I WAS ABLE TO QUALIFY THAT EASILY...!!
RIGHT.
HANZO... I'M REALLY GOING TO DO MY BEST...
WOBBLE
WOBBLE
YOU MIGHT EVEN END UP AN OLD WOMAN BEFORE YOU'RE ABLE TO MARRY HANZO...

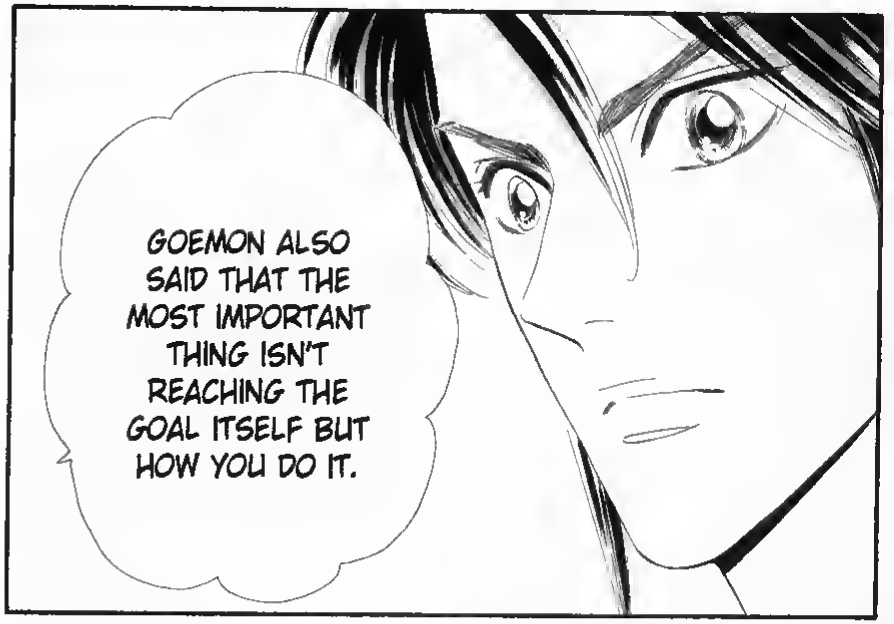
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, USAGI...
IF YOU START PRACTICING EVERY DAY FROM NOW ON, EVEN HANZO WILL ACCEPT YOU...
NO WAY...!
WHA... WHAT SHOULD I DO...?

WHOA!
DOING
YEEARGH
BUMP
OHH
TH...THIS SEEDLING'S GROWN TALLER THAN BEFORE...
YOU ALMOST BROKE IT IN TWO...
I WAS ABLE TO JUMP OVER IT LAST TIME...
Be careful..
DASH
NOW'S THE TIME TO PUSH MYSELF...!!
TWIST
OW...
OUUUUUUCH...
ARE YOU OKAY, LISA...?!

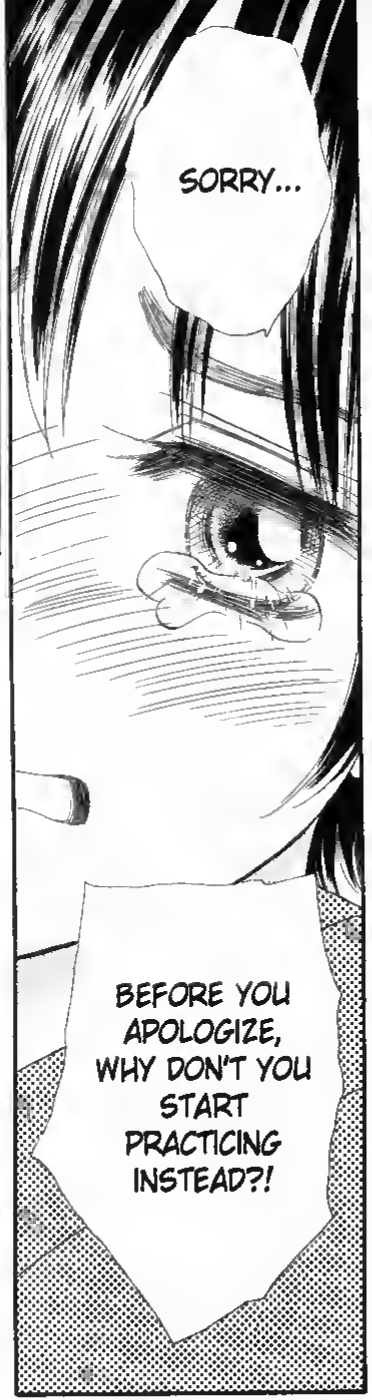
I SHOULDN'T ASSUME TO KNOW MY OWN LIMITS!!
GOEMON ...!!
HOW WONDER-FUL... ♡
REACHING THE GOAL ISN'T EVERY-THING...
THE IMPORTANT PART IS HOW YOU TRY TO REACH THAT GOAL...
LIKE HANZO SAID...
YEAH ...!!

HE HE
TOO BAD I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO JUMP OVER THE SEEDLING TODAY THOUGH...
HOW DARE YOU LAUGH WHILE YOU PRACTICE...
UH...
DO YOU SERIOUSLY WANT TO QUALIFY?!

OWWW...
Y... YEAH.
GOEMON TOLD ME TO PRACTICE EVERY DAY...
SO YOU'VE STARTED PRACTICING AT LAST.
I'VE SPRAINED MY ANKLE...
TROT TROT
OOWWW
HANZO!!


GOEMON ALSO SAID THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT THING ISN'T REACHING THE GOAL ITSELF BUT HOW YOU DO IT.

SO DON'T HATE ME... HANZO...



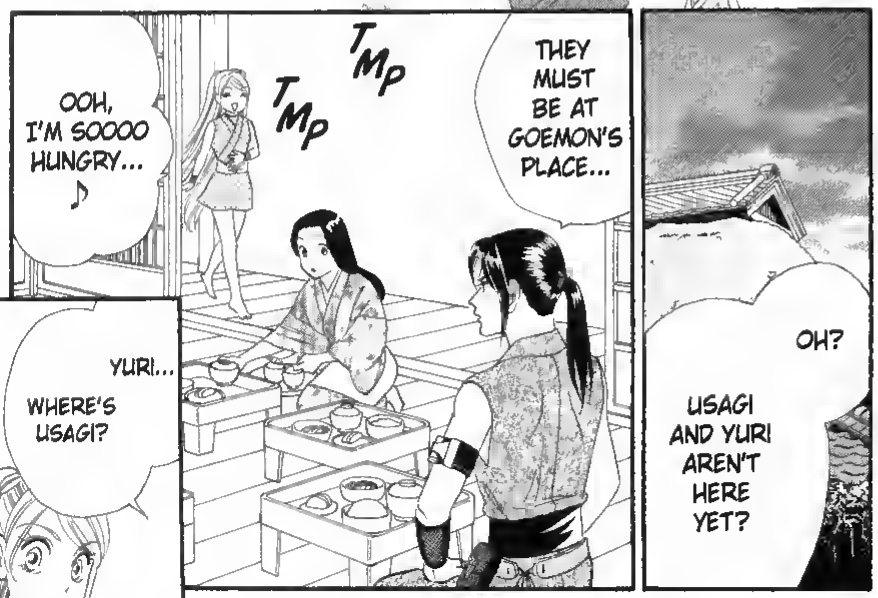
WE HAVE ALL SWEAT BLOOD IN ORDER TO QUALIFY AS NINJA!!
YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO WORK DOUBLE, TRIPLE THE EFFORT OF THE OTHERS TO CATCH UP WITH THEM!!

DON'T YOU THINK YOU COULD HAVE SAID THAT A LITTLE DIFFER-ENTLY...?
THAT WAS HARSH...
TROMP
TROMP
IT WON'T BE GOOD FOR USAGI TO SPOIL HER!!
SPOILING AND BEING KIND ISN'T THE SAME, YOU KNOW.

YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW I FEEL!!
THIS LOOKS SERIOUS.
My, my
TROMP
TROMP

IF I CAN'T DO IT TODAY, THEN IT'S GOING TO BE EVEN TOUGHER TOMORROW...

HANZO'S NEVER GOING TO ACCEPT ME!!
LIMP
LIMP
IF I DON'T TRY NOW...


OOH, I'M SOOOO HUNGRY... ♪
TMP
TMP
THEY MUST BE AT GOEMON'S PLACE...
OH?
USAGI AND YURI AREN'T HERE YET?
YURI...
WHERE'S USAGI?

DASH!
WHOA!
TRIP
DOING

USA, YOU SHOULD CALL IT A DAY...
I was about to crush the seedling...
TH... THAT WAS CLOSE...

I HAVE TO PRACTICE UNTIL I CAN JUMP OVER IT...
BUT YOUR ANKLE'S SWOLLEN...

YEEARGH!

JOLT
AAAAAAH...
I BROKE IT...!!
TH...THE SEEDLING...

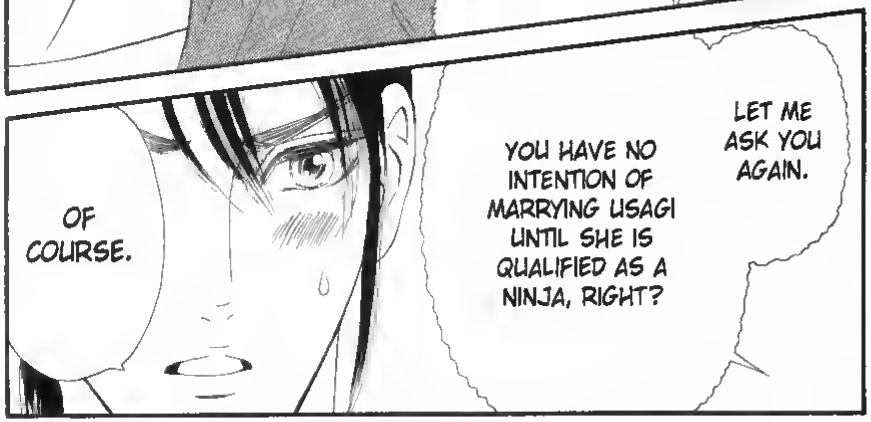
I HAVEN'T SEEN USAGI SINCE NOON.
SINCE NOON...?
USA... I'M HUNGRY...
BUT...
PANT PANT
Y...YOU CAN GO BACK AHEAD OF ME...
DOONK
WHOA!
OW...
THROB

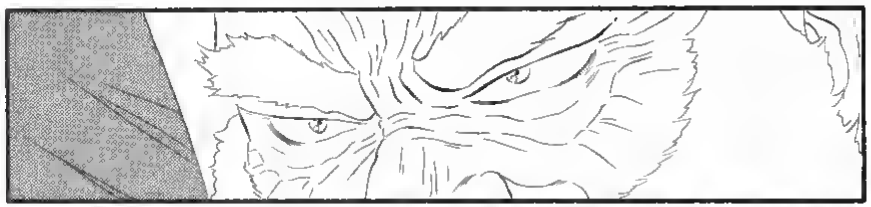
WHAT'S A BIG GIRL LIKE YOU CRYING ABOUT?
MASTER...
WAARGH
GREAT-GRANDPA...
WHA... WHAT?!

HEY, HANZO...
TROMP
TROMP

I PLANTED THIS SEEDLING TOGETHER WITH HANZO...
WHAT SHOULD I DO...?
HANZO'S GOING TO BE ANGRY AT ME AGAIN...
OH LORD...
IT LOOKS LIKE YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH HANZO HASN'T MADE ANY PROGRESS.
TMP
TMP

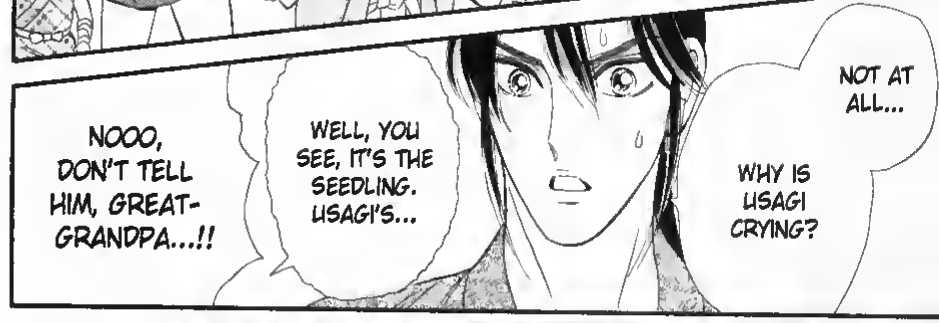
SNIFF
SNIFF
...

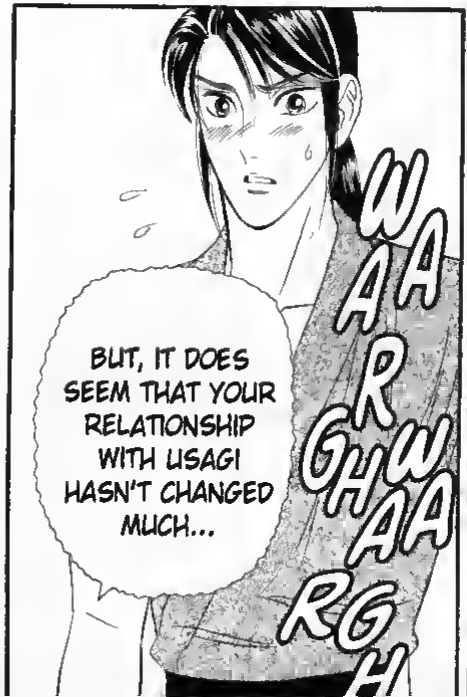

OF COURSE.
YOU HAVE NO INTENTION OF MARRYING USAGI UNTIL SHE IS QUALIFIED AS A NINJA, RIGHT?
LET ME ASK YOU AGAIN.



THEN LET'S BREAK OFF THIS ENGAGEMENT.

OHHH...
OHH...
I'M SORRY YOU'VE HAD TO TAKE CARE OF USAGI ALL THIS TIME...
MASTER TANBA!!


NOOO, DON'T TELL HIM, GREAT-GRANDPA...!!
WELL, YOU SEE, IT'S THE SEEDLING. USAGI'S...
NOT AT ALL...
WHY IS USAGI CRYING?


BUT, IT DOES SEEM THAT YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH USAGI HASN'T CHANGED MUCH...
WAARGHWAARGH

GREAT-GRANDPA... WAAARGH...
WHAT ABOUT THE SEED-LING?
IT'S NOTHING IMPORTANT...
Don't cry...

TO BE CONTINUED...

GREAT-GRANDPA?!
I SENT USAGI OVER TO YOU TO BECOME YOUR WIFE SINCE I BELIEVED THAT SHE WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO SUCCEED AS A NINJA.
BUT I FEEL SORRY FOR HER IF YOU HAVE NO INTENTION OF MAKING HER YOUR WIFE...
BREAK OFF...?

Page 87: **Manga School**
"Manga School" is a section in Japanese manga magazines for people who want to become manga artists. Participants who receive high scores for their sample manga submissions get an award along with a chance to make their debut in the magazine.

Page 87: **Ribon**
Ribon is a monthly Japanese shojo (girls) manga magazine published by Shueisha.

Page 87: **Hikaru Yuzuki**
Hikaru Yuzuki, a former *Ribon* manga artist, is still active in creating manga. He currently has a series in *Business Jump*, which is a Japanese Shonen (boys) manga magazine.

Page 113: **Margaret**
Margaret is a biweekly Japanese shojo (girls) manga magazine published by Shueisha.

The ways of the ninja are mysterious indeed, so here is a glossary of terms to help you navigate the intricacies of their world.

Page 19: **Papillon**
Papillon means "butterfly" in French. Japanese people often call the type of glasses Ue-Rin wears "Papillon(-style) glasses" because of how they look like a butterfly.

Page 42, panel 3: **Ao Tsuzura Fuji**
Ao Tsuzura Fuji is a type of vine traditionally used as a medicinal herb. It is found mainly in Asia, and its scientific name is *Cocculus trilobus*.

Page 42, panel 3: **Otogiriso**
Otogiriso is also a plant found mainly in Asia, but it has a slightly infamous name. In Japanese, the kanji characters break down into "young brother," "cut," and "plant." This name derives from a Heian legend where an elder brother killed his younger brother for disclosing the secret of how to make medicine using this plant. Its scientific name is *Hypericum erectum*.

Page 54: **War of the Roses**
Between 1455-1485, an intermittent civil war occurred in England between the House of Lancaster and the House of York, both branches of the royal house. The war was not called the "War of the Roses" back then, but the name derives from the badges of the two houses: the Red Rose of Lancaster and the White Rose of York.

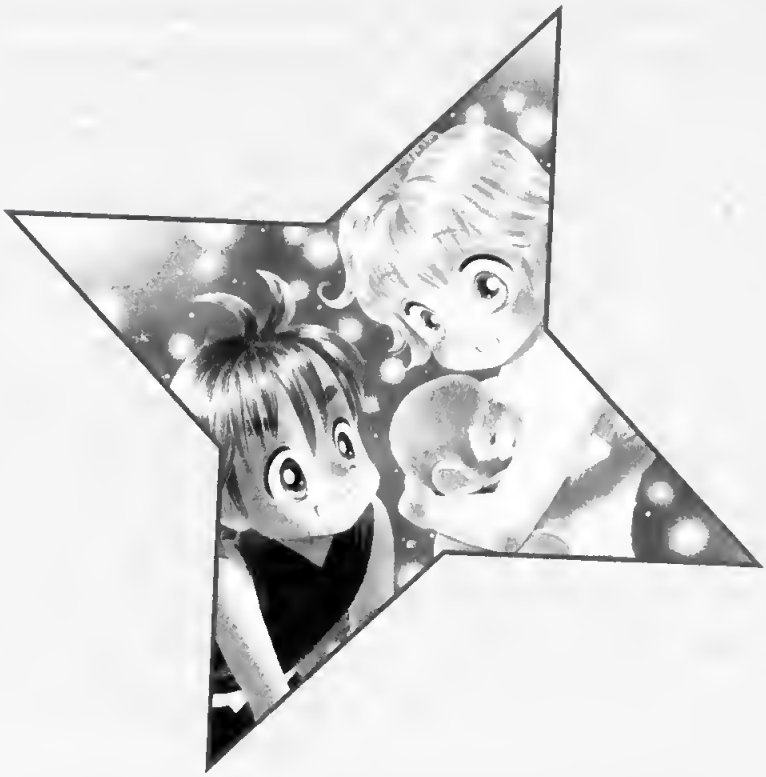
Page 62, panel 2: **Ninjutsu**
Ninjutsu means the skill or ability of a ninja.

Page 2: **Shimo no Hanzo**
Shimo no means "the Lower," and in this case refers to Hanzo's geographic location rather than social status.

Page 9, panel 2: **Kimikageso**
Also known as "lily of the valley," Kimikageso is a poisonous plant that was originally found throughout Japan. The "lily of the valley" that is often seen in Japan now is from Germany, whereas the original Japanese type is said to be rare these days. Its scientific name is *Convallaria majalis*.

Page 11, panel 5: **Iga**
Iga is a region on the island of Honshu and also the name of the famous ninja clan that originated there. Another area famous for its ninja is Kouga, in the Shiga prefecture on Honshu. Many books claim that these two ninja clans were mortal enemies, but in reality inter-ninja relations were not as bad as stories might suggest.

Page 18, panel 5: **Tokugawa Ieyasu**
Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543-1616) was the first Shogun of the Tokugawa Shogunate. He made a small fishing village named Edo the center of his activities. Edo thrived and became a huge town, and was later renamed Tokyo, the present capital.



Things are finally starting to turn out like a ninja manga series. The story is a lot more serious than before, and I had a lot of fun drawing mini-Goemon and mini-Hikaru. It seems as if the Kouga ninja are the bad guys, but please understand that they aren't bad in any way. Both Iga and Kouga have their reasons for doing things, and the clashes between those reasons are what cause the "disputes," so I believe that they are both neither good nor evil.

–Rinko Ueda

Rinko Ueda is from Nara prefecture. She enjoys listening to the radio, drama CDs, and Rakugo comedy performances. Her works include *Ryo*, a series based on the legend of Gojo Bridge, *Home*, a story about love crossing national boundaries, and *Tail of the Moon (Tsuki no Shippo)*, a romantic ninja comedy.

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